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THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,797

THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 1998

(IR50p) 30p

SPECIAL PRICE

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DAVID AARONOVITCH • VIRGINIA IRONSIDE • MARTIN NEWELL • KEN LIVINGSTONE • ADAM MARS-JONES • RICHARD WILLIAMS

Impeachment is put on hold as US prepares to strike Saddam

BY ANDREW MARSHALL AND MARY DEJEVSKY in Washington AND DAVID USBORNE in New York

BRITAIN AND the United States were preparing to strike Iraq last night as the long-running confrontation over United Nations weapons inspectors threatened to boil over into full-scale war.

The prospect of war in the Gulf prompted congressional leaders to postpone "tentatively" today's vote on the impeachment of President Bill Clinton. Mr Clinton moved swiftly from discussion of his impending impeachment to a meeting with his security advisors at the White House to decide on military action.

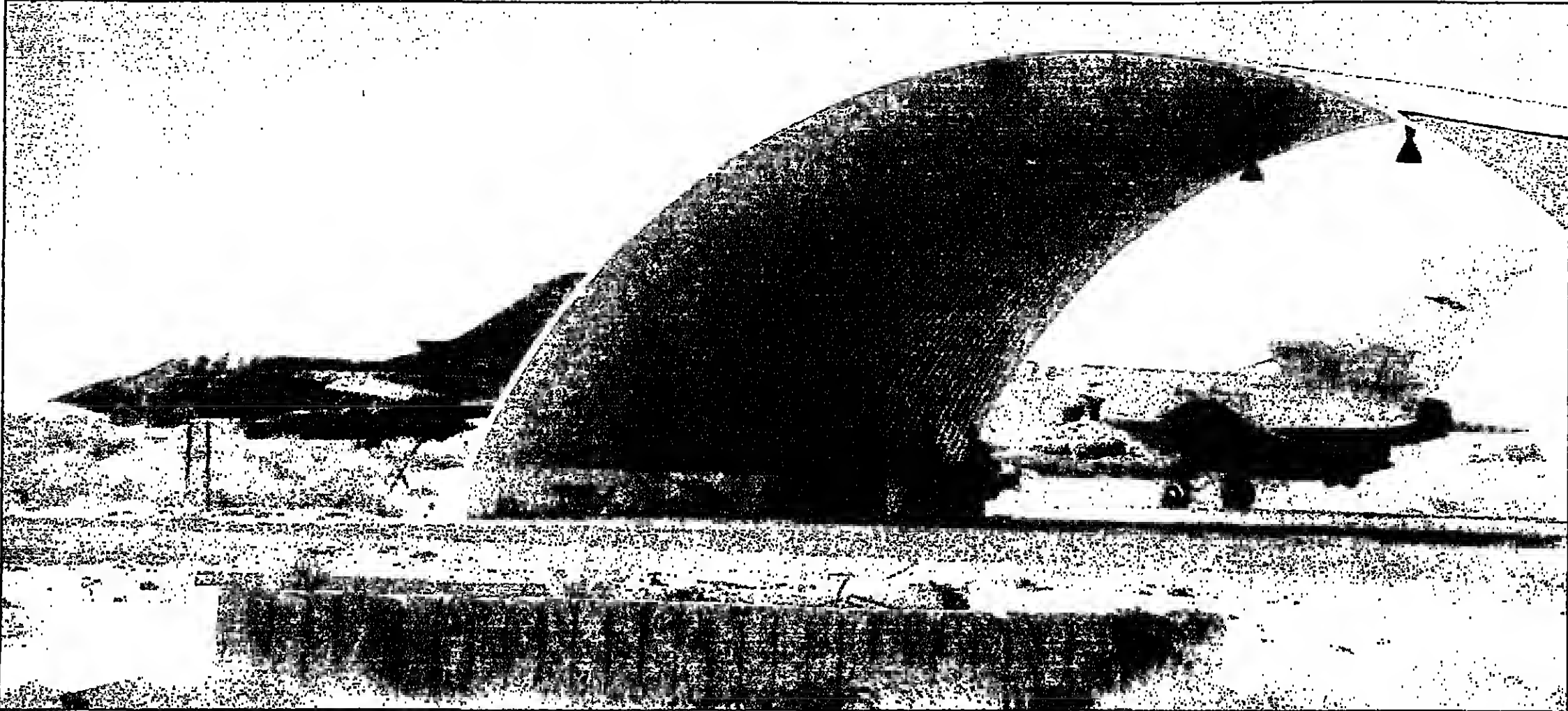
The US said Iraq's refusal to allow the inspectors to search out what they believe are Iraq's weapons of mass destruction had precipitated the crisis.

"There is no end in sight for this pattern of obfuscation, obstruction or outright violation," said the US State Department spokesman, James Rubin.

"We can find no grounds for optimism that the Iraqi leadership, if left to its own devices, will suddenly change course and opt for cooperation in the new year, or if it remains in power, in the new millennium."

The latest threats of military action follow a report from the chief United Nations weapons inspector, Richard Butler. He told the UN in a document released late on Tuesday night that despite promises that it would resume full cooperation with the UN, Iraq had failed to deliver.

When the US drew back from military action in mid-November, it threatened to strike without warning if Iraq broke its promises. After receiving the latest report, the US immediately advised the UN that it should withdraw the weapons inspectors - a sign that military action might be imminent - and at dawn yesterday they began pulling out of Bahrain.



Two Royal Air Force Tornado GR1 aircraft leaving the Ali al Salim airbase in Kuwait for a mission over southern Iraq last weekend. The threat of air strikes against Iraq escalated yesterday AP

President Clinton flew back late on Tuesday from the Middle East, where he had tried, fruitlessly, to persuade Israel to maintain compliance with the Wye peace accords. He arrived to find domestic support for his cause in the impeachment debate ebbing away, as one by one, moderate Republicans announced their intention to vote to impeach him.

Debate of the four articles of impeachment which was due to begin this morning may now begin at a later date, perhaps next week, but time is running out for this session of Congress as Christmas approaches.

The Administration denied strenuously that the clash had any connection with the President's problems. The timing had been set by Mr Butler's report, and by Iraq itself, spokesmen said. Indeed, they raised the prospect that Saddam Hussein may well have timed the confrontation to coincide with Mr Clinton's period of maximum weakness.

The last threatened clash coincided with the congressional elections, which Mr Clinton's Democrats had been expected to lose, but their strong showing gave him added momentum.

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which begins on

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Sunday, may also influence the timing of military action.

The US has over 200 aircraft in the Gulf, a fleet of ships capable of launching Tomahawk cruise missiles and 15 B-52 bombers on the British island of Diego Garcia armed with cruise missiles. The US Navy alone has 300 such missiles in the region.

The US said in November that it planned a large-scale campaign of attacks, which were called off with just minutes to spare. They were aimed at sites where Iraq is suspected of building or storing weapons of mass destruction, but also at the political infrastructure of the nation.

Diplomatic support for the attacks was weak in November, and yesterday a number of nations made it clear they wanted some other outcome than military action.

A meeting of the United Nations Security Council was under way, where other powers were expected to mount a strong effort to persuade America against air strikes.

The Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, said he had contacted the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, and the French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, in an attempt to head off military action.

worsen the situation in the Gulf and the Middle East," he said. "Russia doesn't want that. Russia will do everything possible to avoid this happening."

France said yesterday that more time was needed. "Concerning Mr Butler's report, its content and the question it raises must be given in-depth study by the Security Council," the French Foreign Ministry, at the Quai D'Orsay, said in a

statement. It is unlikely, however, that America will long be delayed by UN opposition. Neither Britain nor America believe they need additional legal authority to mount attacks.

"Given Iraq's manifest failure to cooperate over the last month, if we should choose to use force we would have the necessary legal authority," Tony Blair told the House of Commons yesterday.

Attacks legal and justified, says Blair

TONY BLAIR told the Commons yesterday that air strikes on Iraq were justified and legal because of Saddam Hussein's "delays, deceptions and obstacles" in complying with United Nations Security Council resolutions.

There was a mood of grim resignation at Westminster that the air strikes which had been recalled in mid-flight in November would now go ahead after the damning report of Richard Butler, head of the UN

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

weapons inspectors in Iraq. "Nobody who reads that report can seriously doubt the conclusion that UNSCOM [the special weapons commission] is unable to carry out its role properly," Mr Blair said.

"This is not obstruction for the sake of it. It is a plan of deceit to prevent these weapons of mass destruction being located and destroyed."

"Saddam Hussein, if allowed to develop these weapons of mass destruction, poses a threat not just to his neighbourhood but to the whole world."

The Conservative leader, William Hague, pledged the support of the Opposition. Most Labour MPs appeared ready to back the action, although left-wingers called for a mass vigil against the bombing outside Downing Street.

The Labour MP George Galloway accused President Bill

Clinton of making "a last ditch attempt to avoid humiliating impeachment" by ordering the bombing. Comparing this to *Wag the Dog*, the US film in which a president starts a war to protect himself, Mr Galloway said: "Britain is playing the role of the tail to a very ill-bred dog. Clinton - already condemned as a liar, cheat and deceiver - has no compunction about saving his own skin with the blood of innocent men, women and children in Iraq."

President Clinton and the Prime Minister agreed the action in a 10-minute telephone call between London and Washington at midday yesterday. It followed a 15-minute call from the President to brief Mr Blair on Tuesday night on the Butler report as Mr Clinton flew back to Washington from the Middle East.

The Prime Minister told the Commons on 16 November that there would be "no warnings, no wrangling, no negotiation

and no last-minute letters. The next time co-operation is withdrawn, he will be hit." Downing Street confirmed last night that this time there would be no official warning to Iraq.

The determination within the Government to end the cat-and-mouse game with President Saddam was matched by a widespread feeling at Westminster that unless that threat was carried out this time, the credibility of the British-US alliance would be wrecked.

Shakespeare and a sandwich define Millennium

HERE IS something guaranteed to keep the family arguing during the season of goodwill, just in case Scrabble and the choice of viewing for Christmas Day are not enough: name the most significant people and events of the past 1,000 years.

As if it had not courted enough controversy to last the next 1,000 years, the company responsible for the Millennium

BY R. S. WILLIAMS

Dome had a stah at its choice yesterday when it unveiled a £2m advertising campaign. A television commercial, which begins on Christmas Eve, runs through what it considers the great achievements of humanity during the past millennium. Top of the list are Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, the

moment in the 1780s when the Earl of Sandwich grasped the limitless possibilities of bread, and the compassion of Mother Teresa.

The New Millennium Experience Company's top 12 also includes: the Easter Island statues, Westminster Abbey, William Shakespeare, Florence Nightingale, the invention of television, the lunar landing, the

fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of apartheid and Sir Walter Raleigh's patronage of the potato.

Any debate about whether people need to see advertising to know that a new millennium is on the way will almost certainly be overshadowed by arguments over the commercial's omissions. They include the discovery of penicillin, the

steam engine, the Industrial Revolution, the Reformation, the Renaissance, and Charles Darwin's theory of evolution.

The company said it drew up the final list after consumer research was carried out. But by concentrating on the significance of the new millennium, the commercial ducks any of the controversy surrounding the Dome.

"People know a lot about the Dome," said a spokesman. "But this is refocusing on the whole millennium experience, which people have not yet managed to grasp."

The advertising is stage one of a £16m, year-long campaign that will culminate in a pitch for people to buy tickets for the Millennium Dome when they go on sale next autumn.

"For me will always Christmas"

A perfect combination of smoothness and strength, with a subtle blend of flavours.

A most Gratifying Ale.

Brewed by Morland of Abingdon. Est'd. 1711.

www.oldspeckledhen.co.uk

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Last ditch reprieve for Clinton...

PRESIDENT CLINTON, whose political survival has defied every forecast, seemed on the verge of his most spectacular escape yet after congressional leaders agreed "tentatively" to postpone today's debate on impeachment, citing the looming conflict with Baghdad.

With a US military strike on Iraq predicted within hours, Mr Clinton looked set to be rescued by the two men who have proved more than once his twin allies in adversity - the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, and the UScom chairman, Richard Butler.

The word from Congress that today's debate could be postponed left Mr Clinton suspended awkwardly between world leadership and national ignominy. But possibly, also, off the hook.

The gathering momentum for impeachment looked set to be halted, and was unlikely to regain its full strength.

Almost 11 months to the day since the tawdry tale of the President and the White House trainee blazed into America's political consciousness as a mortal threat to his presidency, Bill Clinton had returned from the Middle East to find himself fighting once again for his political survival.

The personal and political crisis that had faded, flickered and flared by turns was back with a vengeance.

Vice-President Al Gore, who cancelled a campaign trip to New Hampshire to remain by the beleaguered President's side in Washington, made a new plea with Congress - his second in three days - to find a compromise and spare the country the "painful ordeal" of impeachment.

"There's still time," he told reporters, "for Democrats and

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

Republicans to come together and embrace a bipartisan compromise to seek a resolution that is both quick and fair and try to turn away from the bitter partisanship that we have seen so far," Mr Gore said, adding: "That is what the American people want."

There was already evidence, however, that Mr Gore's words were not quite as accurate as they would have been even 48 hours before.

The polls say the American people want the President to survive, but - in a crucial turn - an ABC-USA Today opinion poll on Tuesday showed 58 per cent of them believing that resignation was preferable to a Senate trial.

In other words, the voters would defer to their elected representatives: the "people's President" was losing his popular touch.

Yesterday, every hour brought worse news for the President, as one by one, the so-called "moderate" Republicans, on whose support the White House had pinned its last hopes, all fell dutifully into line behind impeachment.

Bob Ney, from the Ohio valley, the "swing" region that twists to and fro in the political wind, then Bill Billbray from San Diego, who, like so many, cited his children, his morals, his country and its standards in defence of his decision.

Christopher Shays from Connecticut was scheduled to meet Mr Clinton in a last desperate attempt by both sides to prevent what looked to be the unpreventable.

Wild rumours filled the air in Washington of a dramatic appearance by the President in



President Bill Clinton: Every hour brought worse news for him yesterday as 'moderate' Republicans fell into line behind impeachment

the Capitol to plead his own case before the full House, of a new presidential broadcast to the nation, of a tearful intervention by Mrs Hillary Clinton to beg the nation's forgiveness on behalf of her errant husband.

The President's most telegenic lawyer, Gregory Craig, made a final round of talks to argue the President's legal case, which boils down to: "he almost lied under oath, but didn't quite" - but his

heart did not seem to be in it. Even Clinton stalwarts, including Congressman Barney Frank, who is the brother of White House communications director, Ann Lewis, and had defended the President to the

hilt in the judiciary committee, conceded, with a hangdog expression that betrayed his mood, that a Senate trial was almost inevitable.

In the mood of Mr Frank and the White House it was possible to read a sense of bewilderment that the President should suddenly be so imperiled. Was Mr Clinton not the master of the political escape, had he not already survived the Monica Lewinsky scandal and had not the people of America renewed his mandate at the ballot box in giving Democratic Party candidates a surprise victory, on aggregate, in last month's mid-term Congressional elections?

admit that there had indeed been a "not appropriate, intimate relationship" with Ms Lewinsky, for which he was truly sorry. To universal amazement, that admission - by turns abject and bold - had not the slightest effect on Mr Clinton's public support.

His political support in Washington, however, was convulsed. Republicans were apoplectic in accusing him of lying. Some Democrats called for his resignation. White House staff appeared to be in defection mode. The watchword was "disappointment". A slew of apologies, each more solemn than the last, however, saved the President yet again.

The appearance of the report by the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr on 9 September - while it substantiated each and every salacious rumour - was successfully parried by the White House as the work of an anti-Clinton crusader.

And when, two weeks later, the White House quaked in anticipation of the televised showing of Mr Clinton's 17 August testimony, public opinion turned the other way. People were disgusted with the details, unhappy with the treatment of the President, and unfazed by his legalistic arguments.

According to the prevailing view, Mr Starr was prying into areas that were none of his business. The Congress voted along party lines to impeach, on the basis of the Starr report. But the public tuned out. And on 3 November, the first opportunity they had had to register their views confidentially at the ballot box, the voters rescued Bill Clinton yet again.

The chief victim of those elections was the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, who was blamed for the undistinguished performance of his troops. He resigned, and the White House toasted the pervasiveness of fate. But the Republicans persisted in the constitutional process that was their right. And it may have been the dogged, painstaking, formalistic hearings of an undistinguished judiciary committee, which supposedly no one was watching, that turned the tide again. The subject at issue was suddenly not sex but lying and the law, and Mr Clinton started to look vulnerable.

For however many lawyers the White House fielded to defend the President and whatever arguments deployed in his defence, the one thing none of them was able to do (since the hapless Robert Bennett during Mr Clinton's testimony in the Paula Jones case back in January), was to deny the events chronicled in Kenneth Starr's report.

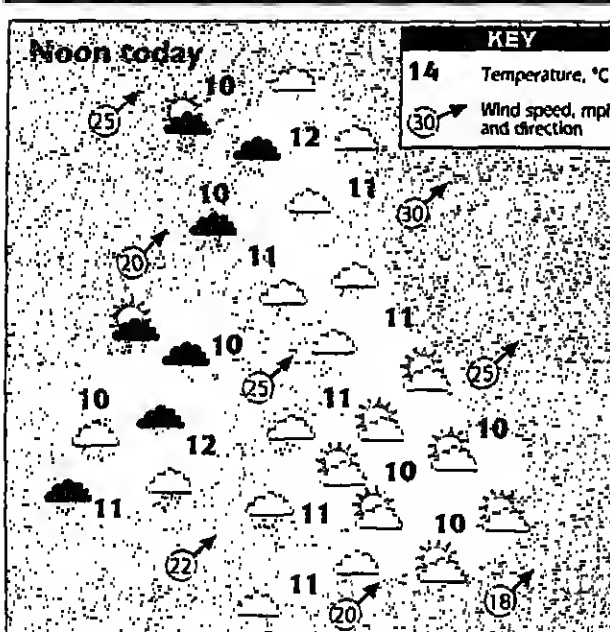
And the President's lawyer's gave ground - he had been "evasive, incomplete, misleading, even maddening", said Gregory Craig, but had not committed perjury.

"Reasonable people" said chief White House counsel, Charles Ruff, might conclude that he had lied, but had not perjured himself.

Opinion polls say that American people still like their President and hope he weathers the latest storm.

Now that their attention has been drawn, day after day, in quiet and lawfully fashion, to the higher issues - equality before the law and the obligation of the country's chief law officer to uphold that law - however, they have started to ask whether an America that indulges Bill Clinton is an America they want for their future. They have also noticed that the President has no real defence. And if their representatives decide that he should stand trial, or even depart, they will not sacrifice their idea of America to save him.

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation Northern Ireland and western Scotland will start wet and windy with some heavy rain and hill fog; strong south to south-west winds might touch gale force. Rain will spread across the rest of Scotland and into Wales and the north and west of England during the afternoon, meanwhile, brighter but showery weather will move into Northern Ireland and western Scotland. The south and south-east of England will stay dry with sunshine but cloud will increase later, threatening rain after dark.

Cent S, E & SE England, London, E Anglia, Channel Is: A locally grey start but sunshine will break through from time to time. Staying dry until after dark. Moderate south to south-west winds. Max temp 9-11°C (50-54°F).

SW England, S Wales: Cloudy and misty at first in many areas. Brightening for a while but becoming overcast again with drizzle or rain later. Fresh southerly winds. Max temp 10-12°C (50-54°F).

N Wales, Cent N & NW England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: Mild but windy and mostly cloudy with rain this afternoon, heavier later. Fresh south to south-west winds, locally strong. Max temp 10-12°C (50-54°F).

Midlands, NE England: Bright for a while but any sunshine disappearing as cloud increases, bringing rain this afternoon. Freshening south to south-west winds, locally strong. Max temp 10-12°C (50-54°F).

N Ireland, SW & NW Scotland, Glasgow, W Isles: Windy with heavy rain and hill fog. Brighter this afternoon with scattered showers. Strong, locally gale force, southerly winds, evening fresh south-western. Max temp 10-13°C (50-55°F).

SE & NE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, N Isles: Mild but windy. Rain by afternoon, turning heavier later. Strong south to south-west winds, locally gale force in exposed areas. Max temp 10-13°C (50-55°F).

OUTLOOK

More rain on Friday, accompanied by gusty winds. Brighter, showery conditions will follow into the west. The north will turn colder on Saturday with showers, westerly over the hills, the south will have a spell of clearer rain.

TRAVEL

London: A41 Finchley Rd. From Swiss Cottage to Fortnum Green. Major works at Finchley Rd gyratory. Until 31st December.

Cambridge: A1 between Alconbury and Hadden. Construction lane closures and contraflow. Until 31st December.

Buckinghamshire: M40 between junctions 1a (M25) & 3 (Woburn East). Three narrow lanes both ways and a 50 mph speed limit in force. Until 1st January 1999.

Stratford: M6 (J18-19) Major Roadworks on A6000 Bridge. Until 1st January 2001.

Lancashire: M6 between 227 Standish and 228 Leyland. Roadworks: contraflow and a

LIGHTING UP

Belfast	3.50pm	to	8.42am
Birmingham	3.50pm	to	8.11am
Bristol	4.02pm	to	8.11am
Glasgow	3.43pm	to	8.44am
London	3.52pm	to	8.02am
Manchester	3.50pm	to	8.21am
Newcastle	3.30pm	to	8.27am

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	4.20	4.2	4.41	4.2
Cardiff	4.31	3.3	4.48	3.2
Dover	10.02	6.2	10.24	6.2
Dun Laoghaire	10.32	3.9	10.51	3.9
Falmouth	4.02	5.1	4.19	5.0
Glasgow	11.48	3.3	11.48	3.1
Hull	10.46	3.7	11.06	3.8
Leith	9.21	3.5	9.37	3.2
Lough	5.13	8.0	5.32	8.2
Malinbeg	5.19	6.0	5.36	6.2
Millport	10.10	8.8	10.38	8.7
Millport Haven	5.07	6.3	5.24	6.4
Newquay	4.00	6.4	4.17	6.4
Plymouth	5.34	1.9	5.50	1.8
Portsmouth	10.22	4.3	10.46	4.4
Swansea	7.04	4.4	7.20	4.4
Scarborough	3.00	5.3	3.20	5.5
Wick	10.18	3.4	10.37	3.3

AIR QUALITY

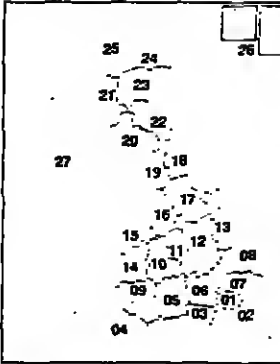
	NO ₂	SO ₂
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises:	08.01
Sun sets:	15.52
Moon rises:	06.07
Moon sets:	15.24
New moon:	Dec 18th

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts call 0951 5099 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met Office. Calls charged at 50p per min inc VAT.



YESTERDAY

EXTREMES

Warmest: Heathrow 12C (54F)
Cooldest (day): Glen Ogle 6C (42F)
Wettest: Bradford, Skye 0.6 ins
Driest: Lulworth, Dorset 5.5 hrs
For 24hrs to 2pm Wednesday
Sun Rain Max

Aberdeen	5.0	0	9	48
Anglesey	1.1	0.02	10	50
Aylesbury	0.1	0.44	6	43
Belfast	3.0	0.01	8	46
Birmingham	0	0.41	10	50
Bournemouth	0	0.38	12	54
Bristol	0	0.34	12	54
Buxton	0	0.12	12	54
Cardiff	0	0.22	12	54
Carlisle	0	0.13	11	52
Croft	0	0.13	11	52
Edinburgh	3.6	0.01	8	46
Exmouth	0	0.08	12	54
Falmouth	0	0.13	12	54
Folkestone	0	0.11	12	54
Glasgow	3.3	0.07	9	48
Hastings	0	0.11	11	52
Hemel Hempstead	0	0.05	11	52
Isle of Man	0.9	0	10	50
Isle of Wight	0	0.16	12	54
Jarvis	0	0.06	12	54
Kendal	0.7	0	9	48
Leeds	0	0.03	10	50
Lewisham	0.1	0.08	10	48
Liverpool	0	0.09	12	54
Luton	0	0.22	13	55
Manchester	0	0.09	9	48
Margate	0	0.02	12	54
Marcambe	0	0.01	12	54
Newcastle	0.1	0.01	9	48
Newquay	0	0.06	12	54
Orford	0	0.05	12	54
Ross-on-Wye	0	0.03	12	54
Salisbury	0	0.01	5	46
Scarborough	0	0.17	10	50
Southend	0	0.04	12	54
Southport	1.5	0.26	7	47
Swansea	0	0.30	12	54
Torquay	0.5	0.04	11	52
Torquay	0	0.12	14	57
Weymouth	0	0.15	12	54

COME RAIN OR SHINE...

THE US FARMLANDS of the mid-west, dubbed the "bread basket", could be due a cataclysmic drought in two decades, fossil experts have warned.

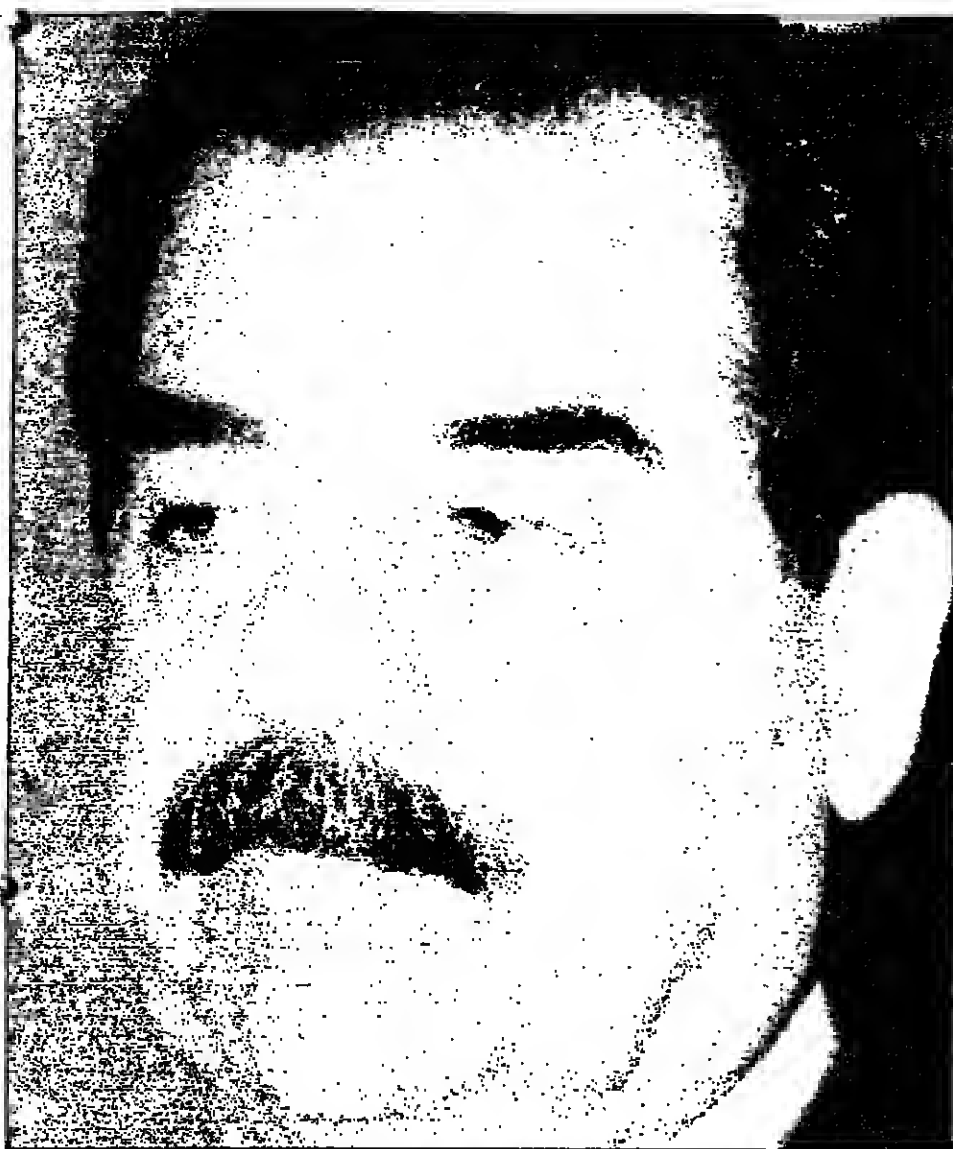
Palaeontologists studying tree rings and other archaeological remains have discovered evidence of weather patterns which suggest that a drought to dwarf even the disaster of the 1930s Dust Bowl will hit North America by 2020.

THE WORLD

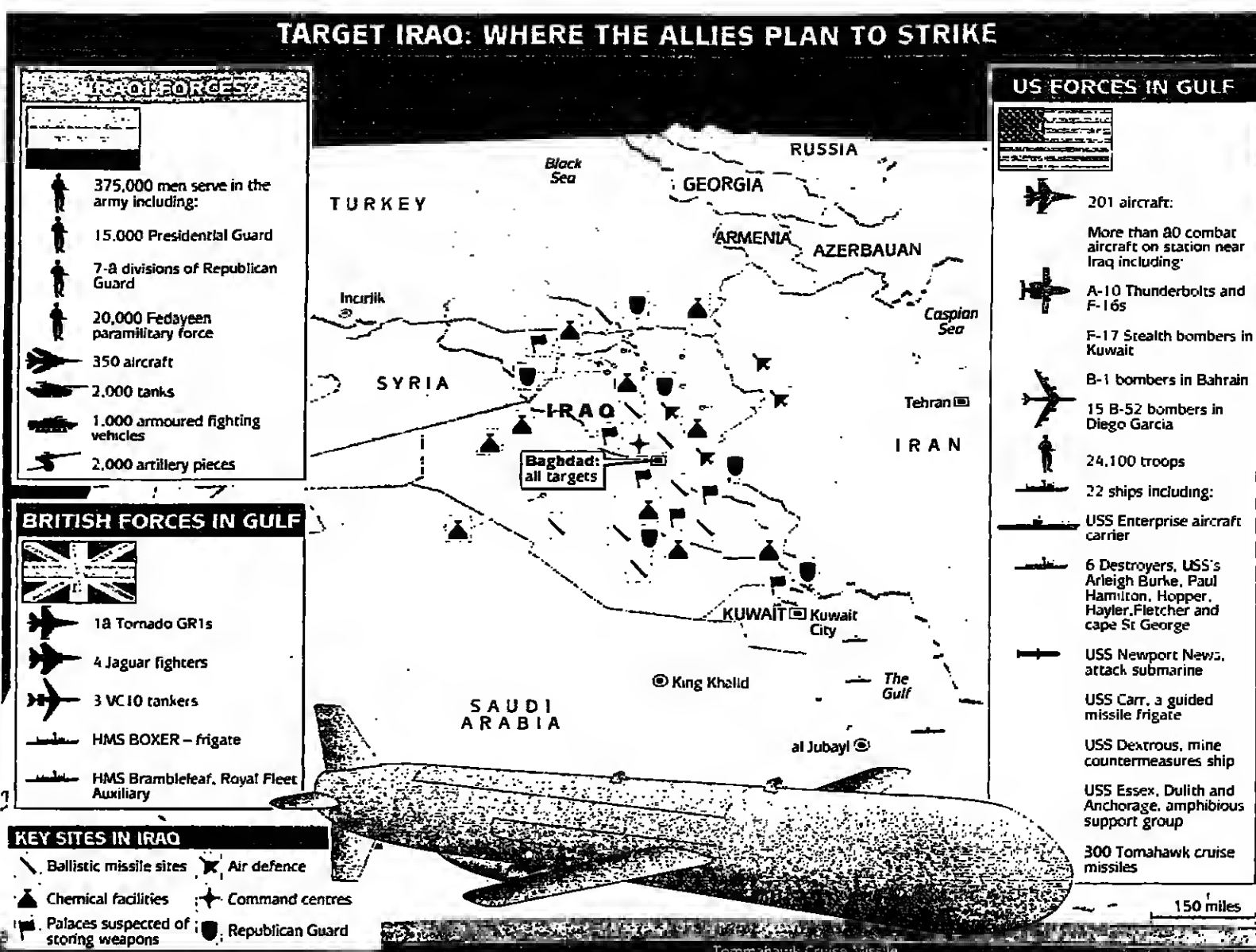
EUROPE NOON TODAY

	Key	Temp	Wind	Dir
Paris	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
London	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Madrid	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Rome	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Amsterdam	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Berlin	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Stockholm	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Helsinki	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Oslo	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Copenhagen	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Warsaw	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Prague	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Bratislava	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Vienna	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Budapest	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Belgrade	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Sofia	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Thessalonika	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Istanbul	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Ankara	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Tehran	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Baghdad	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Beirut	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Tripoli	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
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Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
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Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
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Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Accra	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Lagos	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Abuja	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C
Nairobi	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-15°C	10-

There is no way out for Saddam



President Saddam Hussein, who is facing possible attacks by the United States on presidential sites which have been suspected of harbouring weapons facilities



THE UNITED States and Britain have a huge force already in the Gulf, ready to strike, from the last time that military action looked likely. Though on a much smaller scale than that assembled for the 1991 Gulf War, it is more than adequate for a sustained aerial attack.

The aim would be to hit facilities where Iraq is thought to have the capability to manufacture chemical or biological weapons. But the attacks would also target the "political and military" pillars of the regime, with a view to destabilising it.

The US has more than 200 aircraft and 22 warships in the Gulf. About half of the aircraft are sea-based. The core of the

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

US armada is the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise and its carrier battle group. Alongside it is the 31st marine expeditionary unit, with the USS Belleau Wood. As well as fighter-bombers and fighters, the carrier-based force includes electronic warfare aircraft. The aircraft carrier Carl Vinson is due in the Gulf in the next few days to increase the force. There are additional aircraft based in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

The early stages of the attack would use cruise missiles. It may be that, as with the attacks earlier this year on Sudan and

Afghanistan, cruise missiles alone will be used; but the previous plan had been to mount a more sustained attack, with manned aircraft also utilised. The cruise missiles deployed in the Gulf are, in their own right, a formidable force. There are 15 B-52 bombers on the British island of Diego Garcia - more than usual because the aircraft were being rotated for Christmas - and eight of the cruisers and destroyers in the Gulf are also capable of firing cruise missiles.

Britain has a much smaller force in the Gulf, which is principally important to the US for political reasons: it shows that Washington is not alone. There are 12 Tornado fighter-

bombers in Kuwait, six Tornado reconnaissance aircraft in Saudi Arabia and refuelling aircraft in Bahrain. The Type 22 frigate is on patrol in the Gulf. Britain is in the process of acquiring its own cruise missiles, to be launched from submarines, but does not yet have that capability.

The targets are relatively clear. The sites where Iraq is suspected to be developing chemical and biological weapons are well mapped out, but the problem is that no one really knows exactly what is going on at these sites, precisely because the United Nations weapons inspectors cannot get into them.

But beyond this, the US is

likely to attack targets with more political importance. It may well attack the special presidential sites which have been suspected of harbouring weapons facilities, but where President Saddam Hussein and his leadership may also be present.

And it will hit the facilities of the Special Republican Guard, the unit that guards senior political figures, their homes, motorcades and families. The headquarters of their command, air defence, intelligence and ammunition depots are all in Baghdad, but there are detachments spread across the country, including in the Tikrit region, the home of President Saddam's clan.



A convoy taking UN weapons inspectors in Iraq to the airport yesterday Reuters

How Iraq yet again broke its promises to the UN

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

BRITAIN AND the United States find themselves once more on a war footing in the Gulf because of a 10-page report that landed on the desk of Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, late on Tuesday.

It made grim reading: one month after Iraq had averted military calamity by promising to resume full co-operation with UN weapons inspectors, the evidence indicated that it was failing to do so.

This was the conclusion of the report compiled by Richard Butler, chairman of Unscm, the special UN commission charged with rooting out all weapons of mass destruction from Iraq.

In it, Mr Butler notes that contrary to Iraq's pledge on 14 November, its government has continued to impede his inspectors. Indeed, he said, in the past few weeks, Unscm had made "no progress" on uncovering proscribed arms.

The report appeared yesterday to have taken all sides by surprise. At the behest of Russia, an emergency, closed-door meeting of the Security Council was convened to consider what should come next.

It was a meeting, however, against a background of growing resignation that a bombing campaign may be inevitable this time, whatever diplomatic contortions are attempted in New York.

The release of Mr Butler's report was, ostensibly, the moment when council members were due to consider their own promise to begin a comprehensive review of the crippling UN sanctions that have been weighing on Iraq since its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. In a letter to the council, Mr Annan suggested that that option could still be exercised. But in the circumstances, a review seems unlikely to happen soon.

Few had expected Mr Butler, an Australian diplomat with an

MAIN POINTS OF THE BUTLER REPORT

The Butler report says Iraq is not cooperating with his inspectors and that "no progress" has been possible on hunting down its weapons of mass destruction. These were the principal obstacles:

■ Access - Unscm inspectors were refused free access to the Baath Party HQ in Baghdad. Unscm had "solid evidence" that it contained important evidence of weapons concealment.

■ Cleansing and photography - Some sites had been cleaned by Iraq before inspectors arrived to see them, making inspections a waste of time. Iraq placed new restrictions on photographs that inspectors can take of important materials.

■ Friday prayers - Iraq announced that inspectors could not visit one site because it was on a Friday, the Islamic sabbath.

■ Withholding documents - Of multiple documents demanded by Unscm, Iraq produced just one during the past four weeks. It also turned down an Unscm request to remove missile engine components for inspection.

often harsh tongue, to give more than a reluctant pass to Iraq for the good behaviour test that it has effectively been taking for the past four weeks.

However, nobody, not even the British or the Americans, appeared to have been ready for the single-mindedness of his conclusions. As one council member put it: "I did not expect the degree of non-cooperation which there is in the report. Butler's conclusions are much more clear-cut."

Mr Butler wrote: "In spite of the opportunity presented by the circumstances of the last month, including the prospect of a comprehensive review, Iraq's conduct ensured that no progress was able to be made in either the fields of disarmament or accounting for its pro-

hibited weapons programmes." And he went on: "In the light of this experience, that is the absence of full cooperation by Iraq, it must regrettably be recorded again that the commission is not able to conduct the substantive disarmament work mandated to it by the Security Council."

Suspensions were inevitably voiced that President Clinton will be tempted, in "wag-the-dog" fashion, into military action to deflect attention from his impeachment predicament. But in reality, the tenor and substance of Mr Butler's report allows Washington and London little space for manoeuvre.

On 14 November, when an attack was cancelled at the last minute, Mr Clinton, in particular, left little room for doubt: if

Iraq failed to give full and unfettered access to the inspectors in the coming weeks, military strikes would follow.

The impediments thrown up by Iraq are described in Mr Butler's report in clear detail. First, there is the issue of the serial documents that Unscm has been seeking for months, which, according to Mr Butler and his experts, could shed important light on what armaments Iraq may have held in the past and, indeed, may still have.

Most important among these is a document found this summer by inspectors at the headquarters of the Iraqi Air Force, which was seized by Iraqi officials and withheld from Unscm. The document, Mr Butler wrote, is "directly related to verification of the material balance of Iraq's chemical weapons munitions. Iraq refused to return the sealed envelope with the document".

Of a number of other documents sought by Unscm since mid-November, he added, only one has been handed over.

Inspectors, meanwhile, have also found once more that their access to certain sites under suspicion was far from unfettered. Probably the most serious incident came two weeks ago, when inspectors were turned away from the Baghdad headquarters of Saddam Hussein's ruling Baath party. The building, Mr Butler reported, was "designated for inspection on the basis of solid evidence of the presence of proscribed materials".

But Mr Butler catalogued other difficulties experienced by his inspectors. Among them was the discovery that some sites they visited had visibly been cleared of all possibly incriminating evidence before the inspectors gained access.

One such site was the former headquarters of the Special Security Organisation in Baghdad. Mr Butler complained of "clear evidence that Iraq had taken advance actions at certain locations planned for inspection in order to defeat the purposes of inspection".

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Firefighters clearing up the debris from a 10-vehicle pile-up, in which three people were killed and six others injured yesterday. Several of the vehicles caught fire in the 7am accident on the M20 in Kent. The road between junctions nine and 10 was closed for most of the day KNP

Hogg plan to contain BSE was vetoed

By CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor



Hogg: Concerns 'ignored' by Major's cabinet

FORMER AGRICULTURE minister Douglas Hogg claimed yesterday that the Cabinet rejected his efforts to tighten government policy to prevent BSE being passed to humans, even after a link between the diseases emerged.

Giving evidence to the BSE inquiry in London, Mr Hogg, who was in charge of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) from July 1995 until the 1997 election, described a crisis Cabinet meeting chaired by John Major at No 10 on 19 March 1996, the day before the link between "mad cow disease" and "new variant" Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD) was publicly announced.

During the meeting, Mr Hogg said, he suggested a ban on the sale of any meat or food products made from cattle over two-and-a-half years old. This should have raised safety levels because animals with the disease take up to five years to show symptoms, which is when their tissues are most infective.

But he said his Cabinet colleagues "did not endorse my

recommendations" and the measures announced the next day "fell short of what I regarded as desirable". The Government announced restrictions - rather than a ban - on meat from animals more than 30 months old.

But Mr Hogg added: "Most of my recommendations subsequently became, and remain, the central plank of government policy". In April 1996, the Government revised its stance and banned any use of meat or other products from cattle more than 30 months old.

At the time of the BSE crisis, Mr Hogg was frequently portrayed as ineffectual and MAFF as pandering to farmers' interests. Yesterday he sought to present himself as having

championed the interests of the consumer and the farming industry, but having been overruled when he wanted to take firmer measures earlier.

Mr Hogg also revealed that soon after he took office he had realised that the Government's measures to prevent potentially BSE-infected material passing into human food were not being observed by slaughterhouses. After visiting abattoirs and talking to slaughtermen - who told him they could not guarantee that infected material would not get into the food chain - Mr Hogg took "the firm view that I could not rest the public's health on controls within the abattoirs".

At the time he took charge of MAFF, he believed that the risk of humans catching BSE was similar to the risks involved in "flying or catching a train". His written evidence to the inquiry suggests he held tightly to that view almost up to March 1996.

In it, he described a meeting in November 1995 with Sir Kenneth Calman, the then Chief Medical Officer, who had expressed worry over slaughterhouses' continuing flouting of the rules. This was allied to the surprising emergence of "sporadic" CJD (unconnected to BSE).

At that meeting Sir Kenneth said he was "less confident than a year ago that things were heading in the right direction."

Maff is naff, says survey

THE MINISTRY OF Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is seen as the "Reliant Robin" of Whitehall, according to research commissioned by the department itself.

When asked to name a car that most resembled the crisis-hit ministry, focus groups opted for the three-wheeled vehicle beloved of stand-up comics and Del Boy Trotter.

An organisation that presided over the BSE scandal was never going to be regarded as a Rolls-Royce or a Lamborghini, but civil servants had hoped that it could at least make a comfortable family saloon.

The survey, carried out by MORI and obtained by *The Independent*, shows that the ministry is perceived as uncommunicative, backward-looking, slow and bureaucratic.

Just 20 per cent of farmers described the ministry as "efficient", while just 6 per cent of the wider public thought that it was "competent".

But the severest criticism came from academics, food industry chiefs and other key "opinion leaders", including a

By PAUL WAUGH
AND ROB EVANS

farming adviser to the BBC, *The Archers*.

When asked to pick a car, any car, the group said that MAFF most resembled "a clapped-out Morris Minor and a Robin Reliant".

The study quotes one member of the group as saying: "Scientists acting as politicians and politicians running around as scientists has been disastrous".

Another said: "I am so angry with MAFF because of the BSE crisis where there was a possibility of a half a million dead bodies. I went to bed for a few nights just trying to think through the sheer irresponsibility of putting the public in this situation."

The study is one of a series ordered by ministers soon after the general election to assess the performance and reputation of individual departments.

The research, which was fiercely opposed by civil servants, was based on focus group techniques used successfully by Labour in opposition.

IN BRIEF

Man held over serial sex attacks

POLICE HUNTING a serial sex attacker believed to be responsible for 12 assaults and rapes arrested a man at Heathrow airport early yesterday. The man, in his early 30s, was being held in central London but had yet to be charged last night. Police refused to comment on whether he had been trying to board a plane. The arrest came after a huge response to police appeals for information.

Court to rule on tobacco ad ban

FOUR UK tobacco firms yesterday won the right to challenge the European parliament's decision to ban tobacco advertising and sponsorship. Mr Justice Turner, sitting in the High Court, said there were "clear advantages" in obtaining clarification from the European Court of Justice before the directive is implemented.

£6m for 'botched' hospital project

BRITAIN'S BEST-KNOWN teaching hospital has accepted an out-of-court settlement from developers of a reported £6m. Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust had sued P&O Developments Ltd and Austen Associates for botched work and a delay in the building of Thomas Guy House. The project overran its budget by 80 per cent.

Cleese wins prize for irritation

AN ADVERT for Sainsbury's featuring the comic John Cleese has been voted the most irritating television commercial of 1998. A Clover ad, featuring Rod Hull and Emma, and Sky Digital's televisions about to jump off a cliff, came joint runners-up in the survey by *Marketing* magazine.

DAVID AARONOVITCH

I shall miss Graham Kelly. His miserable features made great copy

IN THE THURSDAY REVIEW PAGE 3

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Callaghan condemns PM's spin doctors

LORD CALLAGHAN of Cardiff, the former prime minister, yesterday urged Tony Blair to rein in the Government's army of "spin doctors" and warned him not to distance Labour from its trade union foundations.

Asked about the high-profile political aides who seek to secure favourable media coverage for their ministers, Lord Callaghan said: "I don't like it. I dislike being spun. I would certainly not carry a pager myself - but then I am so old-fashioned about these things."

Lord Callaghan admitted that, during his spell as prime minister from 1976-79, the government did try to influence the press and broadcasters. "Of course, there was a certain amount of spinning, but we were much more amateur about it. We regarded it as a bit of a laugh, frankly."

He joined the criticism that Parliament has been downgraded since Labour regained power last year. Mr Blair has reduced the two weekly sessions of Prime Minister's Questions to one and rarely takes part in Commons votes.

"I fear the House of Commons is less important today than it was. I very much regret it," he told BBC Radio 4. But Lord Callaghan appeared to defend Mr Blair against allegations that he is a "control freak." He said that was "a reflection of the extreme way the party went in the Eighties."

The former premier said he regarded the Blair administration as a true successor to his own government, citing the actions of Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

and David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, as being "in the true traditions of the Labour Party."

Lord Callaghan supported Mr Blair's goal of forging a national consensus for the Government's policies. But he said it should be done "whilst adhering to our history - by that I mean that trade unions should continue to play a prominent role in the Labour Party."

Lord Callaghan suggested that New Labour's spell in the political centre ground might not last, and that traditional left-right hostilities might resume.

He said British politics was "a kind of pendulum" in which parties went from one extreme to another and then rested in the middle. Although there was now "a period of calm", argument would return.

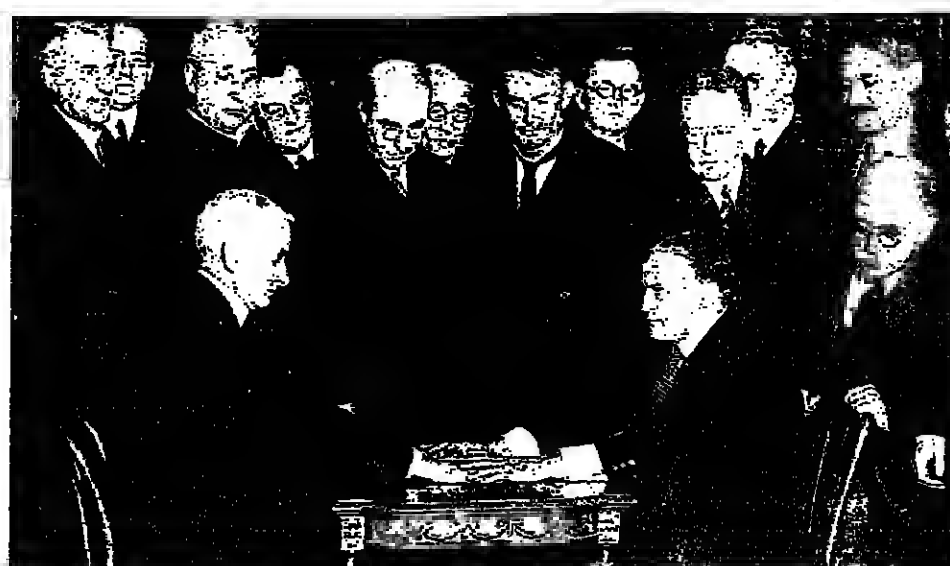
"What Tony Blair has to achieve - and I expect he will - is to ensure that despite the argument, the country gets a clear view of what is going on."

Mr Blair seems to have taken heed of one piece of Lord Callaghan's advice. Yesterday he attended his third meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party in recent weeks and stressed the need for dialogue between ministers, MPs and the party. Until recently Mr Blair had attended the weekly meeting only occasionally.

MPs were promised greater input into the Government's policy-making process yesterday, by David Miliband, head of the Downing Street Policy Unit, who spoke at the meeting.



Houdini with Conan Doyle: Their friendship developed into a longstanding feud



Houdini, who published articles exposing psychics, taking part in a seance

Conan Doyle's very suspicious seance

IT WAS the strange and momentous night when Arthur met Harry.

The Arthur was the creator of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Harry was the legendary escapologist, Harry Houdini. They had been brought together by their shared interest in spiritualism. They met on this occasion in a hotel room in Atlantic City.

The curtains were drawn and the ouija board was produced. Conan Doyle's wife, Jean, allegedly a medium, attempted to summon the spirit of Houdini's mother. As the escapologist and writer looked on she said she had succeeded and conveyed to Houdini seasonal Christmas greetings from his departed mum.

The two men rejoiced at the success of the seance. It was only later that Houdini, no doubt inspired by the spirit of Sherlock Holmes, smelled a rat.

As his mother was Jewish, her first words to her son from the other side were unlikely to be Merry Christmas. And as she spoke only Yiddish it was even more unlikely that she and Lady Conan Doyle would be able to have much of a conversation.

After that evening in 1922 the relationship between writer and

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

escapologist became increasingly strained, developing into a feud. The feud and Conan Doyle's staunch defence of spiritualism is evident in letters by the author to be auctioned today.

The two men fell out for good when Houdini's repeated failure to reach his mother on the other side led him publicly to denounce mediums and seances as frauds. Conan Doyle remained a firm believer in spiritualism.

Four letters written by Conan Doyle to the American journalist and the psychic investigator, James M Bird, are expected to fetch between £3,000 and £3,500 when they go under the hammer at Sotheby's.

Conan Doyle was an admirer of Bird's investigations, even remarking in one letter with a surprisingly modern colloquialism "Wow! What a life!"

The letters encourage Bird in his "quest upon the greatest of all questions" and congratulate him on his "stand against Houdini", adding that Bird, after his investigations, "cannot have the slightest doubt of the preternatural origin of these phenomena. Nothing is SUPERNATURAL."

He also encouraged Bird in his "quest upon this greatest of all questions - so great that the most powerful argument against it is that its general acceptance would dwarf the affairs of life."

Also for sale at the auction is a pamphlet, *A Word Of Warning*, which Conan Doyle wrote in 1928 saying that the world faced an impending crisis to which he had been alerted through his spirit guide.

Meanwhile, a frustrated Houdini had published a series of articles exposing mediums and psychics as fakes.

Taking issue with one of these, which refers to a photograph of a levitating Chicago medium that Houdini said was false, Conan Doyle wrote: "He told me that he could see the foot of Mrs Thomson in the photo taken with him in Chicago. I should think that the real argument is that where a medium is faking she would take particular notice that her foot was not visible."

Included in the sale is an LP brought out in 1970 of *The Final Houdini Seance*. That seance, which took place on 31 October 1936, involved Houdini's widow attempting to contact her late husband. She failed.

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IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

It was only Richmond Park but the ramblers all had boots and backpacks

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Human clone claim challenged

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

A TEAM of scientists from South Korea claimed yesterday to have cloned the world's first human embryo, which it destroyed within days.

Cloning experts in Britain, however, cast doubt on the claims, saying that the research failed to show that the embryo was a genuine human clone created from the fusion of a human egg and an adult cell.

Professor Lee By-yeon, a medical researcher at the Kyunghee University Hospital in Seoul, told journalists that he had produced an embryo from an egg cell which had divided twice to the four-cell stage.

He said that he used a technique developed at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu, where scientists announced earlier this year that they had successfully cloned several generations of mice from a single female mouse. "Our experiment marked the first time that the more reliable cloning technology has been applied to human cells and might make human cloning more feasible," Professor Lee said.

The experiment, which has not been published in a peer-reviewed journal, was stopped when the embryo was at the four-cell stage because of a resolution adopted in 1993 by South Korean scientists prohibiting the research from going further.

"If implanted into the uterine wall of the carrier, we can assume that a human child would be formed and that it would have the same gene characteristics as that of the donor," Professor Lee said.

The Korean scientists said

ANIMAL EXPERIMENTS THAT COULD APPLY TO PEOPLE



1962

John Gurdon, then a young developmental biologist at Oxford University, showed that it is possible to clone a vertebrate animal. He took cells from the intestine of a South African frog and transferred them into unfertilised eggs to produce fully mature adults. Several attempts to repeat the work on mammals failed, leading some scientists to suggest it was impossible.



1970s-1980s

In the late Seventies, Steen Willadsen, a scientist working at the Agricultural Research Council near Cambridge, showed cloning was possible in higher animals, such as cattle, by manipulating embryo cells. By the early Eighties it was an established method of making clones but scientists still believed it was impossible to clone embryos from adult animals' cells.



1990s

The Roslin Institute, near Edinburgh, used nuclear transfer to clone sheep. A pair of sheep clones - Megan and Morag - developed by transferring embryonic cells into unfertilised eggs, were born in 1996. They were followed by Dolly, the first clone of an adult animal created by transferring a nucleus of an udder cell taken from a six-year-old ewe into an egg cell.



1998

Scientists from the University of Hawaii in Honolulu successfully repeated the Dolly work using a slightly different approach. They managed to clone several generations of mice from a single adult female, using a process that was far less wasteful in terms of creating non-viable embryos. It was the first hard evidence to suggest that cloning could be applied to humans.

they removed the nucleus of an egg cell donated by a 30-year-old woman and replaced it with a nucleus taken from one of her ordinary "somatic" cells, which triggered the resulting embryo to divide twice to the four-cell stage.

However, experts from the Roslin Institute near Edinburgh, where Dolly the sheep was cloned in a similar process

two years ago, said the South Korean work failed to show that the embryo was genuine and viable.

"Firstly, we do not believe the Korean group has sufficient scientific evidence to back its claim of having cloned a human embryo," said Dr Harry Griffin, the director of science at the institute. "The experiment was stopped when the embryo was

seen dividing into four cells. A fertilised egg goes through the first few cell divisions - three in human - on 'autopilot' and it is only after the eight-cell stage that the nucleus of the cells take control of further development of the embryo."

A key factor in showing that the experiment has produced a genuine, viable clone was to determine whether the egg cell's

new nucleus really was in control of the cell. "By stopping the experiment when they did, the Korean researchers are unable to provide any evidence that the transferred nucleus had been successfully 'reprogrammed'," Dr Griffin added.

The institute also cast doubt on the cloning credentials of the Korean team. "There is little in the reports to suggest that

their work is part of a substantial programme of research," Dr Griffin said.

Professor Lee said the purpose of the research was to investigate ways of producing human embryos to generate tissue for transplant surgery, and not to create a cloned baby.

Donald Bruce, a biomedical ethicist and director of the Church of Scotland's Society Religion and Technology Project, said the Korean experiment had broken new ground, even if it is proved not to be scientifically valid. "The fact that someone tried to create cloned human embryos raises ethical concerns. Is it ethical to create a cloned embryo that you then have to destroy because it would be unethical to allow it to become a baby?" he said.

Pinochet law lord 'could not be biased'

BY KIM SENGUPTA

THE LAW LORD who failed to declare his links with a human rights group while sitting in judgment on General Augusto Pinochet was not showing bias, and upheld principles which all reasonable men should support, the House of Lords was told yesterday.

Any revelation by Lord Hoffmann of his association with the charity connected to Amnesty International would have created "a potentially anarchic situation" in which a series of objections could be raised over the make-up of judges' panels, said Alun Jones, QC, for the Crown Prosecution Service.

Mr Jones told the hearing that judges are, and should be, involved in charities, and the principles Lord Hoffmann privately upheld - being opposed to torture and unlawful killings by the state - should meet with the approval of all who uphold the law.

A panel of five law lords is being asked by lawyers for General Pinochet to overturn the Lords' decision that the former Chilean dictator did not have immunity from prosecution.

Lord Hoffmann, a director and chairman of Amnesty's charity arm, Amnesty International Charity Ltd, cast the final and decisive vote in the original three-two ruling.

The chairman of the hearing, Lord Browne-Wilkinson, stated that, if possible, a decision on the case would be given this morning.

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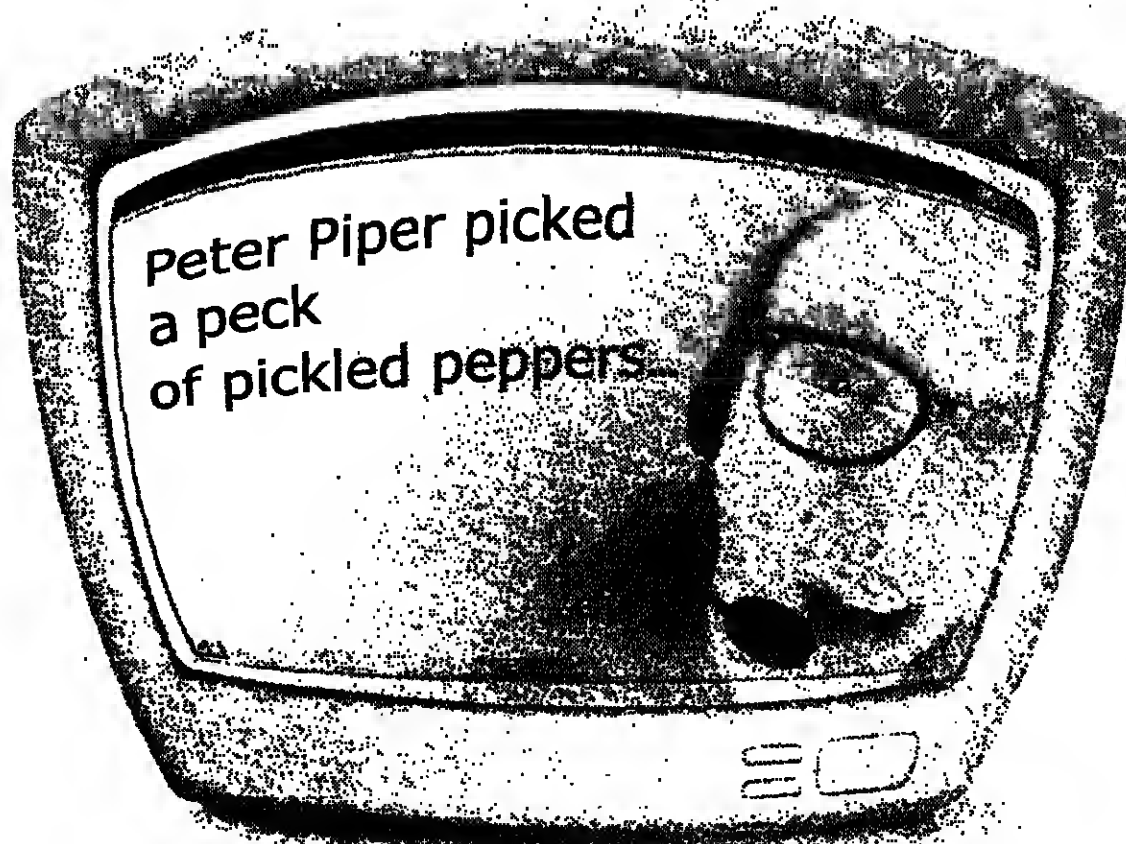
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Lambert propels tourists to first win

BY LAWRENCE P. FROST

THE FIRST of the new millennium was marked by a triumph for the United States as the first American team won the World Cup of ice hockey. The victory was a significant moment for the sport, which has long been a popular pastime in the United States. The team, coached by Larry Yarbrough, defeated the Czech Republic in a closely contested final. The win was a testament to the skill and determination of the American players, who had spent the previous year preparing for this moment. The victory was celebrated across the country, with fans cheering and waving American flags. The team's success was a source of pride for the entire nation.

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INDEPENDENT
17 December 1998
REVIEWS
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Lew Grade rides off into an art director's sunset



The burial of the showbiz mogul Lord Grade at the Liberal Jewish Cemetery in north London yesterday afternoon

LEW GRADE, the last great showbiz mogul of the 20th century, was buried at 4pm yesterday against a picture-perfect winter sunset straight from central casting. Jet aircraft drew white lines like a credit sequence across the sky of icy blue, while long elegiac clouds were touched with vivid reds and golds.

The over-the-top sunset was nicely appropriate for a man whose energies and enthusiasm were always on an epic scale. Lord Grade, who died on Sunday morning, just 12 days short of his 92nd birthday – an anniversary he shared with the subject of one of his most successful films, *Jesus Christ* – was buried at the Liberal Jewish Cemetery in Willesden, north London. The graveyard is pitched between the back of a suburban terrace and a children's playground.

The local rabbi sang by the graveside. The sky became a mad nursery daub of pinks and blues. This combination of grandeur and domesticity was mirrored by the service for which 200 friends and family crowded into the bleak chapel with its stark wall heaters and tiny globe lamps.

It was a very private, dynastic affair. The press was excluded, although a platoon of paparazzi set up their telephoto lenses beyond the cemetery gates. Embellished showbiz luminaries and friends from the media – David Puttnam, Jeremy Isaacs, Roger Moore – took their seats, along with a rogues' gallery, dimly familiar from Lord Grade's ATV adventure series in the Sixties. But there was no sign of Tony Curtis, who starred in Lord Grade's *The Persuaders*, nor of Joan Collins with whose father, Joe, Lord Grade set up his first theatrical agency; nor was there any trace of his most conspicuous worldwide clients, the Muppets.

Michael Grade spoke movingly of his favourite uncle with whom he shares a taste for tough bargaining and colossal cigars. "We will have to learn to live without the twinkle, the phooie calls, the superlatives, the sweep of his handshake and the lingering whiff of Havana tobacco," he told the congregation. "The only good thing to come out of this is the thought that the world shortage in Cuban cigars may now be at an end."

Often close to tears, the Channel 4 chief said his uncle was never driven by mere personal gain. "What interested him was the game – the idea, the pitch, the sale – and on to the next deal and the next." Had he been born in pre-business times, he said, Lew "would have surely been an explorer in uncharted territories".

Led by Lady Grade, former singer Kathleen Moody – they were married for 56 years – and his adopted son, Paul, the funeral party left for the Westminster Synagogue. By the limousines Eddie Bell, chairman of HarperCollins, who published Lord Grade's ebullient autobiography *Still Dancing* in 1987, looked stunned. "I can't believe he's dead," he said. "He rang me from New York only days ago to rave about a new writer he had discovered. I bought the book, too."

Warning to editors on 'racist reports'

POLICE are threatening to charge several newspaper editors with inciting racial hatred following inflammatory reports and comments on asylum-seekers arriving in Kent. One editor has been called into Kent police offices and warned that he faces prosecution if his newspaper continues to publish offensive material. The offence carries a maximum 10-year jail term.

Detectives are compiling evidence from several other publications and intend to issue further warnings to their editors.

The move follows complaints from several people including the Dover MP Gwyn Prosser, and a solicitor who believe the newspapers are breaking the law and press guidelines.

Kent police yesterday took the unusual step of criticising local and national newspapers for their coverage of the immigration issue, particularly recent reports about asylum-seekers arriving in Dover, Folkestone, Gravesend and Dartford.

A force spokesman described some of the reports as "inflammatory" and "unacceptable". He blamed them for heightening tensions and attracting far-right groups, such as the National Front.

Earlier this month, Kent police warned Nick Hudson, group editor of a number of weekly newspapers including the *Folkestone Herald* and *Dover Express*, that he risked being charged with inciting racial hatred.

Among the articles published in October in the *Dover Express* was an editorial headed "We want to wash down drain". It said: "Illegal immigrants, asylum-seekers, boot-leggers ... and scum of the earth drug smugglers have targeted our beloved coastline ...

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

we are left with the backdraft of a nation's human sewage and no cash to wash it down the drain."

In a story under the headline "DSS cheats are now into brothels" in October, about a campaign against the asylum-seekers, it quoted a woman saying: "The police are called out up to 15 times a day because of immigrants shoplifting. And at least three brothels have popped up around Dover."

Mr Hudson, who worked on the *Daily Sport* and *Sunday Sport*, said: "I'm merely reflecting my mailbag. I don't think we are making the news, we are merely reflecting it."

A spokesman for Kent police said: "There has been a lot of inflammatory coverage which has raised tensions among communities and attracted members of far-right organisations, which is something which concerns us greatly."

Among the incidents to provoke a flurry of negative articles – most noticeably in *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail* – was the discovery several weeks ago of 103 Romanian men, women and children hiding in the back of a lorry in Dartford.

Five days ago, the door of a house in Dover where two Slovakian refugees had been staying was set alight in a suspected race attack.

Following the articles on the Romanians, police had to deploy extra officers to give them protection.

Mr Prosser, a Labour MP, said: "One of the local newspapers in recent months took a most hostile view on the asylum and immigration problem. It added to the difficulties in Dover and inflamed an already difficult situation."

Deportation of woman 'invalid'

AN ASYLUM-SEEKER walked free yesterday after the Court of Appeal ruled that the Home Secretary had unlawfully held the woman in custody for nearly seven months. Ganiyatu Sanusi, 20, a Nigerian, wept after she was released, but she still faces deportation.

Following yesterday's ruling Ms Sanusi's lawyer claimed that hundreds of other asylum-seekers would benefit from the court decision, although this was later denied by the Home Office.

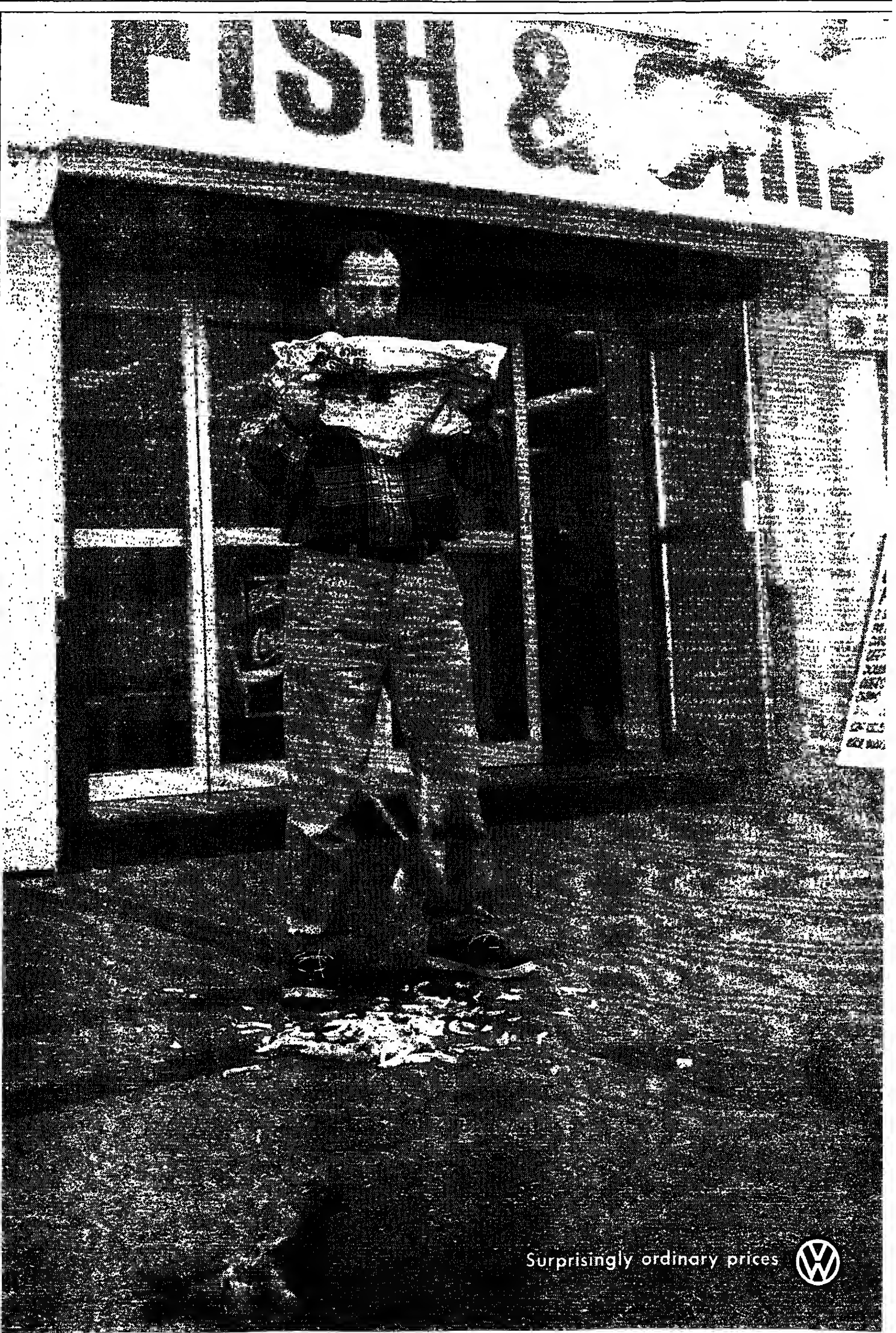
The three Court of Appeal judges ruled that Jack Straw had made "an invalid deportation order" for Ms Sanusi. They said the Home Secretary could not attempt to deport someone while their application for asylum was still being considered. Lord Justices Evans, Ward and Brooke ordered that their

BY JASON BENNETTO

judgment should go directly to Mr Straw who should give "anxious and careful consideration" to the woman's situation and take notice of their comments when he reconsidered her application to stay in Britain.

Ms Sanusi, who has been in Britain since her 13th birthday and married a British citizen nearly two years ago, said: "I am so happy now. This means I can now go back to college to study accountancy."

A Home Office spokeswoman said that officials would be examining yesterday's ruling before deciding whether to try to deport Ms Sanusi. She said that they may make a petition directly to the House of Lords in an attempt to have the judgment overturned.



Surprisingly ordinary prices



Altogether now, let's sing along to Blair's favourite tunes

I WAS thinking about Tony Blair's Saddam problem as I sat down for Prime Minister's Questions, because, although my experience of recalcitrant and murderous Middle Eastern dictators is limited I do have young children and have learnt, like many parents, that you should never make a threat that you don't have the will and the means to carry out. My own situation, granted, is less serious in its consequences than Mr Blair's. But the general principle holds. Though I have sometimes longed for a stand-off destructive capability so that I could threaten to take out one of the five-year-olds' cherished in-

stallations (Star Wars firebase as a first-strike target, I think) unless he immediately complies with parental resolutions on footwear implementation. I know that any such action would involve unpredictable hand-to-hand fighting. Naturally I lose my nerve, make more threats and before long the five-year-old is blithely expressing the view that I am a pooh-head - much what Iraq has recently been saying, in slightly more sophisticated terms, to the United Nations weapons inspectors.

It was significant, then, to find that Mr Blair had done with making threatening noises, which, as

most children swiftly recognise, are usually a deferment of action rather than a reliable guarantee that it will follow. And William Hague was in equally grave and serious mood, rising from his seat after a Prime Ministerial jab at Tory administration of public services not to rebuff the insult but to offer the full support of the Opposition at this difficult hour. All he wanted was an assurance that Saddam Hussein himself was on the list of legitimate targets and the opportunity to express solidarity with the men and women of the armed services.

The issue, it seemed, had passed beyond debate - but for the un-

THE SKETCH



THOMAS
SUTCLIFFE

conscripted presence of Tony Benn, rising to inveigh against the legality and morality of any proposed at-

tack. "Why does he do everything he's told by President Clinton," he concluded, a remark that pressed a consensual moan of impatience from the House, with its suggestion that the Prime Minister should be seen as a biddable child in this affair, rather than the reluctant administrator of discipline.

It was probably the sharpest opposition Mr Blair faced all afternoon, though he was pressed hard on recent changes to the pension system, which the Tories had identified as bearing down rather grievously on the thrifty poor. The Prime Minister didn't answer, seizing the wheel and steering the House back

towards the general hysteresis of the Government's pension plans as a whole. He opted for a detour a little earlier too, after a challenge from Ian Bruce over the employment rates for 18- to 24-year-olds. Mr Blair was a little rattled by the statistics he quoted, I think, given that he started by addressing himself directly to employment figures ("His facts are wrong") but segued into that old crowd-pleaser "Interests Rates Have Fallen". His wheeled out of this old standard brought about a golden oldies section of the performance, with an obliging Labour backbencher rising to invite the Prime Minister to

encore his recent chart-topper "Cooperation Is Better Than Confrontation".

Perhaps Millbank could get together with K-Tel to issue a compilation album of the Prime Minister's best-loved melodies. It would make the perfect gift for ambitious Labour backbenchers, who could settle down over the Christmas break and hum along to those unforgettable hits - "No More Boom and Bust", "We'll Take No Lessons From The Gentleman Opposite", "Eighteen years and Eighteen months" - all these and more, in a collection you'll come to cherish. Karaoke version only, of course.

Hague backs use of force in the Gulf

THE PRIME MINISTER was given unequivocal backing yesterday by the Tory leader, William Hague, for the use of military action against Saddam Hussein providing it had "clear and achievable objectives".

But Tony Blair came under pressure from his own benches when Tony Benn, the veteran left-winger, claimed that any bombing of Iraq would be "illegal in international law", adding: "Why do you do everything you are told by President Clinton?"

Mr Blair insisted during the last Question Time of this year that President Saddam was operating a "plan of deceit" to prevent weapons inspections, threatening not just the Middle East but the "whole of the world".

He said: "Given Iraq's manifest failure to co-operate over the last month, I am quite satisfied that if we should choose to use force, we have the necessary legal authority to do so."

Expressing the Tories' support for military strikes, Mr Hague told the Prime Minister: "In the light of the fact that Sad-

PM'S QUESTIONS BY SARAH SCHAEFER Political Correspondent

dam Hussein is still failing to comply with UN resolutions on weapons of mass destruction and bearing in mind that nothing less than complete compliance is acceptable, can I assure you of the full support of the Opposition for the use of military action in the days ahead, provided that action has clear and achievable objectives?"

Replying, Mr Blair said the report by the chief weapons inspector, Richard Butler, listed in very clear terms the "obstacles placed in the way of the weapons inspectors, the delays, the deceit, the refusal to provide documents, the restrictions on inspections".

He went on: "Nobody who reads that report can seriously doubt its conclusions that UNSCOM [the inspection committee] is unable to carry out its job properly. Indeed the report states that there are greater restrictions now than previously."

Mr Blair reminded MPs of the

"very clear assurance" given by the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, Tariq Aziz, on 14 November that Iraq would co-operate unconditionally with the UN inspectors, saying: "That promise is clearly now broken."

Mr Benn, MP for Chesterfield, warned the Prime Minister that military action would be contrary to the UN charter which required unanimity among the five permanent members of the Security Council.

He said: "It would also be illegal in international law, it will cause the death of many innocent people... leaving Saddam stronger, and it will inflame the Middle East. And why do you do everything you are told by President Clinton, instead of taking an independent view in support of the charter?"

Mr Blair denied "such action would be unlawful", adding: "I take it as agreed that the regime of Saddam Hussein must be stopped from building these weapons of mass destruction. The question is how. It can either be done by him complying... or we have to look for other ways in order to enforce his agreement."



The number of beacon schools will go up from 75 to 200 next year David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, said while visiting a nursery school in Islington, London, which has beacon status, aimed at sharing the secret of its educational success Andrew Buurman

Inquiry of 'little use' Commons hours reform boosted

AN MPS' inquiry into the "Arms to Africa" affair has served little useful purpose, the Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said yesterday.

Mr Cook, facing the last of 11 public sessions between the Foreign Affairs Select Committee and Foreign Office ministers or officials on the issue, claimed the MPs' inquiry had simply covered old ground.

The official inquiry by Sir Thomas Legg, published in July, had provided a full version of what happened, Mr Cook suggested. The Foreign Office had already acted on its recommendations.

"I don't think your hearings have covered a single material fact that was not already in Legg," Mr Cook said.

He criticised the committee's

attempt to investigate the matter while Sir Thomas' inquiry was going on, saying it would have placed a "double jeopardy" on officials.

Since it emerged in May that officials met mercenaries who shipped arms to Sierra Leone in breach of an embargo, Mr Cook has appeared before the committee three times. His junior minister, Tony Lloyd, has appeared twice. Sir John Kerr, the Foreign Office permanent secretary, has appeared five times. The High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold, appeared once.

Yesterday the Foreign Secretary said he accepted mistakes had been made. A more politically aware atmosphere in the Foreign Office might have led to the issue being drawn to his attention sooner, he said. He also criticised Mr Penfold for not making sure he had a copy of the order which confirmed the embargo in British law.

Mr Cook said the FO was looking into a report that GCHQ had warned his department about Sandline International's plans to aid the exiled government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, but had not been believed. He said as not aware of any such communication.

A Foreign Office spokesman said GCHQ officials "have confirmed there is no substance to these allegations".

Editor denies being MI6 agent

IS DOMINIC Lawson, the editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, a paid MI6 agent? The question was raised yesterday in the House of Commons under parliamentary privilege.

It follows reports at the weekend that renegade MI6 officer Richard Tomlinson claims that a national newspaper editor had been recruited and paid by MI6. Speculation over the identity of the editor has been rife in the media.

Yesterday, Labour MP Brian Sedgemore (Hackney South and Shoreditch) named Mr Lawson as being at the centre of the allegations. "That seems a very odd thing," he said.

"It would be very damaging for the press if it were true. It's an allegation being made by Mr Richard Tomlinson. I have no

idea whether it is true but it surely is something we should look at."

Mr Lawson yesterday denied he was an agent for anybody. A spokesman for the Foreign Office, which oversees MI6, said: "This comes from a now wearily familiar source to us of sensational inventions... we can point out very forcefully that [we] would never have an agent who is the editor of a British newspaper."

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A Foreign Office spokesman said GCHQ officials "have confirmed there is no substance to these allegations".

HOUSE REFORM BY SARAH SCHAEFER Political Reporter

MPs WERE last night poised to back overwhelmingly reforms to introduce more family-friendly working hours despite concern from the Tories that it would lead to a "four-day week".

They were likely to support a report by the all-party select committee on modernisation of the House, chaired by Commons Leader Margaret Beckett, which recommended an experiment with morning sittings on Thursdays.

The Government proposed bringing forward Thursday sittings by three hours, to start at 11.30am, with main business finished at 7pm, rather than 10pm, the changes starting from January through to the end of this parliamentary session next autumn. The plans have been criticised by Betty Boothroyd, the Commons Speaker, who said such changes would limit public access to Parliament.

Opening debate on the matter, which is to be decided by a free vote, Mrs Beckett warned: "Institutions that fail to change are institutions that die."

The House of Commons is expected to vote on the reforms next week.

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Quintessence (kwint-ess-ence) - med. L. quinte essence - med. L. quinte essence. 1. The 'fifth essence' of ancient and medieval philosophy, the substance of which the heavenly spheres were composed. 2. The cats whiskers 18th century part of any substance; a highly refined essence. 3. The purest or most perfect form or manifestation of a quality. 4. The bees knees. 5. Consummate; of the highest quality. 6. Model of excellence, something to be imitated. 7. Impeccable; Not liable to error. 8. Sublime; exalted, surprising. 9. The top dog. 10. The most refined of its kind.

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مركز الامارات

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Planning: Rising concern over superstores' impact on small towns as thousands of independent retailers close every year

Historic town set for battle of Tesco

THE SHOPKEEPERS of Beverley are calling it Round One. As they heard that planners had thrown out Tesco's proposed supermarket in their medieval market town, they were readying themselves for Round Two.

"There's bound to be an appeal by Tesco's. They are not the sort to run away," said John Dibb, owner of the Fresh and Good fruit and veg shop. He and others in the East Yorkshire town have for months been urging people to say No to Tesco, so banners strung across the streets and posters in windows of the many traditional and specialist shops.

"Beverley is unique in this area. It's like a mini York or a mini Norwich. Tesco's would be just a brick lump on the edge of the town centre which would snuff the life out of the place," said Mr Dibb.

It's a familiar argument - one that has been heard across Britain over the past 10 years. Mr Dibb believes that building a supermarket with a retail area of 54,900sq ft and spaces for 478 cars on the site of the 1,300-year-old cattle market would draw trade out of the heart of Beverley, ultimately killing it.

"It's false to think the supermarket will attract more people to the town. People won't be bothered after they've shopped at the supermarket."

Nick Rander, owner of a traditional shoe-repair shop in Beverley for 13 years, agreed. "I came here because it was a

BY ESTHER LEACH AND KATHY MARKS

traditional market town and it promised a good trade, but now the place is losing that identity as more and more multiples move in. I am already losing money with the introduction of paid parking. I told my partner if another supermarket opens here I would move out."

A generation ago, there were 40,000 independent retailers in Britain; now there are just 10,000. The superstores that have sprung up on the fringes of towns and on sites farther afield over the past two decades have played a large part in that decline.

Opponents say that the superstores - there are now more than 1,000 of them around Britain - have torn the hearts out of traditional market towns, forcing small shops to close and ruining social life in rural communities.

Grocers are closing at a rate of 800 a year; butcher shops at a rate of 1,000. And as the large food retailers diversify to offer other services, post offices, drycleaners, pharmacies and newsagents are suffering too.

The impact was spelt out in a report commissioned by the Government which was published in September. The report, by the consultancy CB Hillier Parker, found that superstores reduce trade in local shops by up to 50 per cent.

It is government policy to



Beverley is an ancient market town full of traditional and specialist shops. Traders fear that a Tesco store would ruin them. *Guzelian*

discourage the building of more out-of-town shopping complexes, but decisions on whether to grant planning permission are made by local authorities in the first instance. The recent report said that,

contrary to the claims of retailers, such developments do not boost local employment, as on average more jobs are lost in the town centres than are created in the new stores. Nor do they "claw back" trade from

more distant shopping complexes, it said. The authors recommended that planning regulations be tightened and that permission for superstores be granted only when there is a genuine need.

The food retail chains are increasingly targeting smaller towns, which are least able to digest the impact. In Cumbria, for instance, the supermarket Boots has won planning permission for a 21,000sq ft devel-

opment on the edge of the picturesque town of Kirkby Lonsdale, which has a population of only 1,600. It is not only out-of-town superstores that kill town centres. Those on the edge of

towns and even in the centres damage the traditional high street.

Traffic jams can be a by-product of supermarkets. In Newbury, Berkshire, the congestion that led to the construction of the controversial bypass is blamed on two out-of-town supermarkets whose car-borne customers clogged the roads leading to them.

Numerous disputes are looming around the UK. In Hexham, Northumberland, for instance, Safeway wants to build a 9,000sq ft development on the edge of town. Traders fear it would pull shoppers away from the historic town centre because it would be located on the other side of a busy main road.

Some towns are fighting back. In Leominster, near Hereford, local traders have launched a loyalty card - used to obtain gifts and discounts - which they say has helped to win back customers from a Safeway store. Thirty-five shops in the centre had closed.

Meanwhile, the shopkeepers of Beverley await their fate. Tesco said it was "highly likely" that it would appeal to John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister and Environment Secretary, against the decision of East Riding Council planning committee.

The benefits to the council, at least, are obvious. The deal would have made the local authority £7.5m on the sale of land.

'I see no future for the High Street'

BY JOHN DAVISON

"DUCK AND orange sausages. Better than Viagra," it says on the sign outside the shop of R J Balson & Son, alongside more standard encouragement to 'order Christmas turkeys NOW. The firm, in Bridport, Dorset - which boasts of being England's oldest family butchers (since 1535) - is clearly not afraid to move with the times. In four years since a Safeway superstore opened outside the town it has had to, or face going out of business.

"You have got to concentrate on things that the supermarkets don't do. We do a lot of game, that kind of stuff, otherwise we just couldn't compete," said Richard Balson, the proprietor. The "Viagra" sausages poster came about, he said, after four customers who were having problems conceiving got pregnant within a month of eating the specialist fayne (£2.60 per lb).

In the year following the superstore opening it was reported that 40 businesses had gone under, and the High Street was pitted with boarded up shops. Yesterday, on market day, Bridport looked like any other thriving small town, with only an ice cream parlour standing vacant. But many of the old general retailers have been replaced by estate agents, solicitors, cafes, gift and charity shops. Meanwhile, the car park at Safeway, about half a mile from the town hall, looked comfortably full.

Not everyone is unhappy. Locals say that the superstore is rarely crowded, it is bright, warm, and the staff are friendly and helpful. It is convenient and, crucially, the parking is free.

"You could see the problems when we first got here but the town has managed to revive itself," said Ros Fry, who arrived from London four years ago with her family. "As the shops close they are replaced with interesting specialist



Safeway (top) is challenging trade in Bridport where shops are boarded up. *Samatha Pritchard/Apece*

shops which have definitely added something to the place." Recent additions include a patisserie and a record shop which will find you "absolutely anything", she said. A recent frustrating shopping trip to London ended with her finding the gift she was after in Bridport's gentleman's outfitters.

Community campaigners say that the influx of people from outside, including a large number of retired people, has distorted the local economy, leaving it vulnerable to a general downturn. But recent research by a student at Bournemouth University found that 37.5 per cent of retailers felt that the superstore had had a noticeable effect on trade.

Tim Crabtree has pioneered

Farmers' Markets in the town, where producers sell direct to the public. "Small towns are seeing that food can be a way to rejuvenate the local economy," said Mr Crabtree. "It is a lesson that all small towns need to learn."

It is a message that would certainly be welcomed by Alan Holland, who runs Washing Pool Farm Produce, the only remaining town centre greengrocer. He saw his business cut by 50 per cent overnight when the superstore opened. He survives by servicing the growing local restaurant sector. "We have only kept going because we're a family and we grow a lot of our own stuff," he said. "Maybe increased tourism will save us, otherwise I don't see a future for the High Street."

Shopping is coming home

A NEW service unveiled yesterday will enable shoppers to avoid crowded supermarkets by ordering goods by remote control.

Customers at Safeway will soon be able to compile their shopping lists on portable electronic organisers before picking up their groceries ready for collection. The palm-sized device is being marketed at people who want to shop from home without needing to go online.

Mike Winch, Safeway's information technology director, said: "We have provided a personalised system which can be used with the minimum of fuss. The idea is for the consumer to

BY LINUS GREGORIADIS

communicate with us from any place at any time. All you need is a phone socket to plug it into."

The scheme - called Easy-Orders - will be tested in Basingstoke, Hampshire, from February and will be introduced by other Safeway shops if successful. The chain is giving away the devices during the trial but has yet to decide if it will charge for them should the service be expanded.

With 9 million Britons already connected to the Internet, shopping from home is already a rapidly expanding business for supermarkets and

other shops. A recent survey by Dell Computer and Louis Harris & Associates found 43 per cent of British computer owners were planning to buy something online this Christmas.

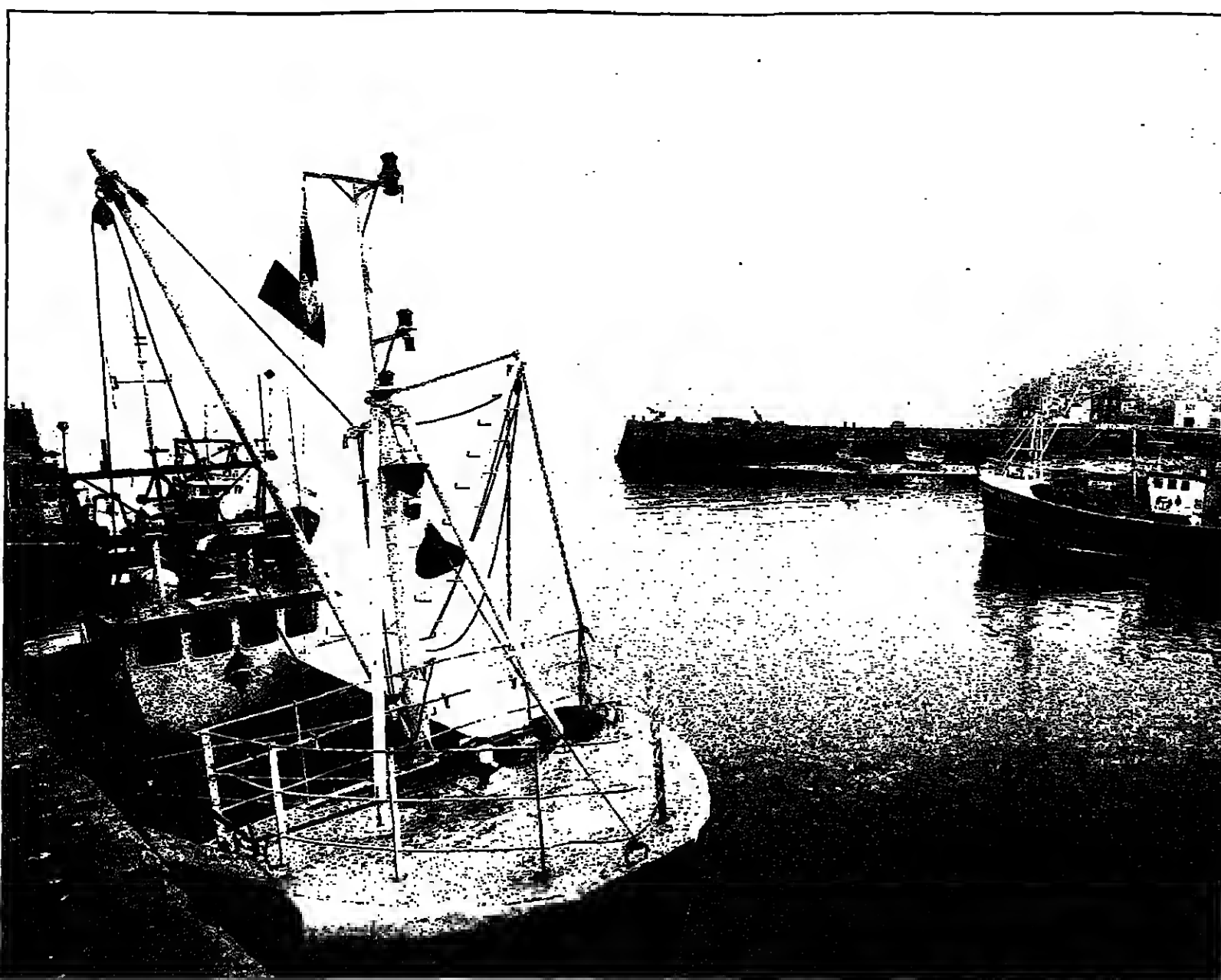
Safeway said it is aiming to create a scheme which combines Internet technology with a personalised system. Colin Smith, it's chief executive, said: "We can now deliver an intelligent, unique and portable shopping service."

Noel Rees, retail industry director at IBM, which has helped to develop the project, said: "This combines the power of network computing with easy-to-use handheld devices."

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Whitby fishermen face cuts in permitted catches next year including a reduction of nearly 25% in the North Sea haddock quota. Brian Harris

Fishermen braced for quota cuts

THE GOVERNMENT will today agree to massive cuts in British fishing quotas proposed by Brussels under Europe-wide plans designed to conserve rapidly-dwindling stocks.

The move, likely to provoke consternation among British fishermen, will come at a crunch meeting of European fisheries ministers called to set total annual catches.

Britain will call for changes to just five of the 50 categories which affect the UK, dashing the hopes of most of the country's 10,000 fishermen who argue that their livelihoods are at stake.

A British official argued: "We are taking a cautious approach based on scientific advice. We need to conserve stocks today otherwise we run the risk of there being no fish stocks in the future."

At today's meeting, Eliot Morley, the Fisheries Minister, will agree to a 23 per cent reduction in the 80,370 tonnes of herring fished this year off the west coast of Scotland, to

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

62,000 tonnes in 1999. British fishermen are entitled to 60 per cent of that catch.

Other traditional British fishing waters which will be hit include haddock catches in the North Sea, where the UK agrees with a cut to the total catch from 115,000 tonnes in 1998 to 88,500 next year - a cut of nearly a quarter. The UK's quota is 78 per cent of this figure. The whiting catch will also be slashed from 60,000 tonnes to 44,000 tonnes next year, a drop of 27 per cent. British fishermen are entitled to just over half.

And cod fishermen in the Irish Sea will also be hit. British fishermen are allowed to land 43 per cent of the total permitted catch which was 7,100 tonnes this year. In 1999, the figure is set to be reduced to 5,500 tonnes, a cut of 23 per cent.

Of the five areas where Britain is seeking an increase, the biggest is haddock fishing off the west coast of Scotland, where a reduction from 25,700 to 18,100 is planned. The UK, which is entitled to 81 per cent of that catch, believes that the scientific evidence does not fully support the cut.

The other catches where Mr Morley will be arguing for increases are: cod and had-

dock off the west coast of Scotland; herring in the Irish Sea; plaice in the English Channel; and sole in the Bristol Channel and Celtic Sea.

In one area the UK will argue for a lower total catch than Brussels proposes. For sprat in the North Sea the European Commission wants to see increases from 150,000 this year to 175,000 next. Mr Morley wants to stick at this year's figure.

The figures for total allowable catches are drawn up on the basis of data from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea. The commission says that "concern remains for a number of stocks" although in a few exceptions, such as plaice and sole in the North Sea, the permitted catches will increase.

Detailed negotiations are likely to go into the early hours of tomorrow as ministers have to agree the whole package.

Discussions have been complicated by a dispute among Mediterranean countries over bluefin tuna stocks. France and Spain are holding out against moves to redistribute some of their quota to Italy and Greece, both of which have suffered penalties for over-fishing. Although the size of the total catch is small, the fish is one of the most valuable in the world due to its popularity in Japan.

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Irvine would not ban boy's killers' book

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

LORD IRVINE, the Lord Chancellor, was plunged into fresh controversy yesterday after he said that the boys who murdered James Bulger should be allowed to write a book about their crime.

In a comment that drew criticism from both James's mother and opposition politicians, Lord Irvine said such an account could "add to the sum total of human knowledge".

"I obviously don't find it attractive that somebody can earn money from giving an account of a criminal activity," he said. "On the other hand I cannot bring myself to prohibit it, because of the public interest in knowing about these things, so I think there is a balance." He added: "I don't think anyone would find it attractive - but the sum total of human knowledge is added to."

Robert Thompson and Jon Venables were detained at Her Majesty's pleasure after they were convicted of murdering James Bulger. The pair were aged just 10 when, in February 1993, they abducted two-year-old James from a shopping centre in Bootle, Merseyside, before leading him to disused land and beating him to death.

Yesterday James's mother, Denise Bulger, 30, said she was disgusted by the Lord Chancellor's comments. "I think the Lord Chancellor is totally wrong to allow anyone to cash in on my son's death - it makes me sick," she said. "He is almost encouraging someone to write a book by not banning it."

Lord Irvine made his comments at a regional newspaper conference last Friday. They were reported yesterday in the *Liverpool Echo*.

Yesterday a spokeswoman for the Lord Chancellor said the comments he made were general and not specific to any case.

Lord Irvine's comments appear to put him at odds with the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, who has said he believes that he does not believe criminals, including Thompson and Venables, should be allowed to profit from their crimes.

Last night Conservative home affairs spokesman James Clappison said: "The Lord Chancellor must clarify his position on this most contentious of issues, as it appears he and the Home Secretary are on a collision course."

Icelandic sagas for a long life

BY CATHY COMERFORD

THE SECRET to a long life lies somewhere in Iceland, according to a new book of facts and figures on Europe.

Icelanders expect to live the longest of all the 46 countries included in the *Economist Pocket Europe in Figures* despite also having the highest level of nitrogen oxide emissions per head.

Air pollution notwithstanding, Icelanders can expect to live to be 79.3 compared with age 77.1 in the United Kingdom. Perhaps the fact that Iceland also has the best currency rate against the dollar means they feel able to sit back and look forward to old age in comfort.

The UK, while landing an unlucky 19th in the life expectancy race, can look to its laurels for comfort. It has won the highest number of Nobel prizes in the sciences and economics since the awards began in 1950, gaining 47 prizes with Germany running a slow second at

only 26. The guide, published by Profile Books in London and compiled by the *Economist's* research department, is a veritable goldmine of enlightenment, particularly where preconceptions about a nation's habits abound.

It may not come as a great surprise to learn that we love our music, buying on average the most LPs, cassettes and CDs each in Europe last year. But it is the Belgians who are the continent's top CD consumers with 98 per cent of their albums bought in CD format. Hungary has the best ear for classical music while the UK falls to joint eighth alongside the home of opera, Italy.

Also, contrary to our image abroad as a nation of huge drinkers, the Czechs take the prize as the biggest beer consumers and Portuguese the biggest wine guzzlers.

THE INDEPENDENT
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Haughey is let off £2m tax liability

GHOSTS OF Charles Haughey scandals past returned to haunt Taoiseach Bertie Ahern yesterday when it emerged that the former premier had had a tax liability on £2m of secret gifts reduced to zero.

Mr Ahern became implicated when opposition deputies (TDs) discovered that the extraordinary concession was overseen by his own brother-in-law, Ronan Kelly, a tax appeals commissioner. The finance spokesman of the Democratic Left party, Pat Rabbitte, asked Mr Ahern if he accepted that it "gives the wrong impression to the public, without reflecting in any way on the man's competence, that the brother-in-law of the present leader of Fianna Fail should adjudicate on the tax affairs of a former leader of Fianna Fail?"

Mr Haughey's liability was dropped on the technicality that tax authorities had not conclusively documented the identity of the donor. The total liability is believed to have been close to £2m.

Amid rowdy scenes in the Dail, opposition critics alleged that Mr Ahern had himself appointed Mr Kelly to his present post without advertisement. Mr Ahern replied that he first heard of Mr Kelly's involvement when he read about in yesterday's Dublin newspapers.

The latest escape by Mr Haughey, whose skill in eluding

BY ALAN MURDOCH
in Dublin

previous icebergs earned him the nickname "Houdini", was greeted with general disbelief.

Some of the gifts - three bank drafts totalling £210,000 - were handed to Mr Haughey at his Georgian mansion by supermarket magnate Ben Dunne in 1991 with the words "Here's something for yourself." The politician replied "Thanks Big Fella," the McCracken tribunal investigating payments to politicians was told in July last year.

Mr Haughey, who finally admitted this payment, faces prosecution next year for obstructing the tribunal's work.

Labour leader Ruairi Quinn said it was "simply incomprehensible" to ordinary taxpayers how an appeals process could doubt the payment when it had been admitted by Mr Haughey. He said it was "incredible... when a tribunal set up by this house that found that a man was corrupted while in the office of this country" should not be required to pay tax due even on the £210,000 he specifically confirmed receiving.

Mr Ahern said the Department of Finance could appeal against the decision to either the circuit, high or supreme courts. Later, the Finance Minister, Charles McCreevy, told the Dail he would not comment on indi-

vidual cases but insisted the appeals avenue was open to all. His response was greeted with calls of "outrageous" from opposition benches. Mr McCreevy also confirmed that Mr Ahern appointed Mr Kelly during an interregnum between government meetings on 9 December 1992.

Last night, pressure on Mr Ahern increased as his Progressive Coalition partners demanded the publication of the Haughey appeal. Despite possessions including a 280-acre Dublin estate, a private island, racehorses, a yacht and a family helicopter company, Mr Haughey told the McCracken tribunal "I want to say I did not have a lavish lifestyle."



Former Fianna Fail leader Charles Haughey. It has been revealed that his tax liability on £2m of secret gifts has been reduced to zero

ould
boy's
book

MILLENNIUM BUG WATCH

WHAT QUIRK of fate used to decide that it was always old-age pensioners, rather than yuppies, who would receive nasty letters from the gas company demanding immediate payment of £0.00? Whatever it was, a similar one is now operating in relation to the millennium bug.



An entertaining article in the latest edition of the American magazine Vanity Fair collects a wonderful litany of "Y2K" errors that have cropped up in the past couple of years as (American) companies and organisations have realised that testing is part of the process.

In some cases, the realisation has been forced on them - such as the three hospitals and 75 clinics in Pennsylvania whose appointments system shut down when a

user tried to schedule a visit for January 2000.

But all those fade before the letter that dropped onto a doormat in Minnesota where Mary Bandar lived. It was from the schools inspectorate, informing Mary that she was due to report to kindergarten: according to the computer, she had just hit the magic age of four years old.

Close, as they say, but no cigar. Mary Bandar was born in 1888, and was 104.

CHARLES ARTHUR

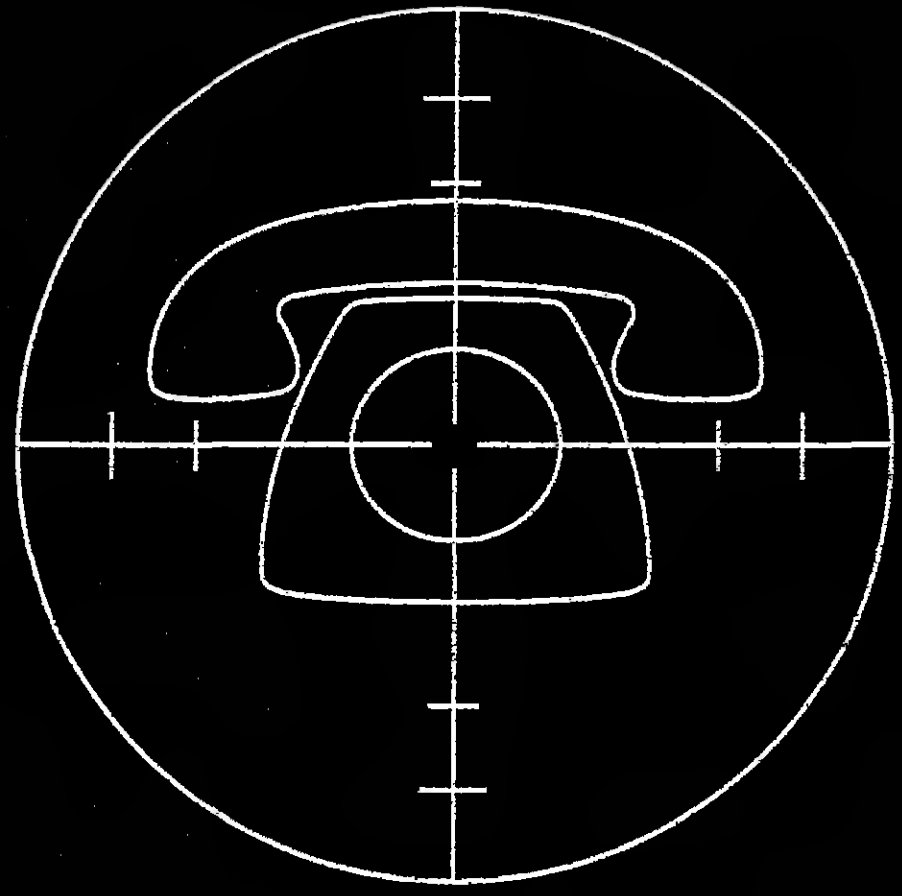
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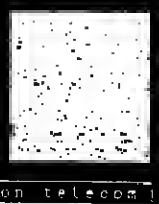


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Doctors who choose to reject the old

LEGAL MEASURES to combat age discrimination in the National Health Service and in financial services could be proposed in Parliament next year, campaigners say.

The charity Age Concern, which made an impact earlier this year with an "age discrimination week", hopes to persuade sympathetic MPs to push through the moves by amending government Bills.

It says elderly people face being struck off by doctors because they may require costly treatment, and sometimes find that when they are ill they do not receive the same care as a younger person. Routine breast-cancer screening stops at 64. Pensioners also find it more difficult to get car insurance, mortgages and cheap credit.

Age Concern says a new voluntary code of practice on discrimination at work is unlikely to go far enough. Before the election, Labour promised legislation on the issue. However, a private member's Bill brought by Linda Perham, the Labour MP for Ilford North, was talked out.

By FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

Jonathan Stearn, the charity's public affairs manager, said Bills about to be published on primary health and financial regulation could be amendable to protect the elderly.

"We have heard of examples where people have had coronaryaries in their early seventies, and their relatives have heard doctors pleading with the coronary unit to treat them, saying they are quite young for their age. Rehabilitation units discriminate against older people. That is what we want to see stamped out," he said.

According to Age Concern, 40 per cent of post heart-attack rehabilitation programmes impose age limits on admissions, along with 30 per cent of coronary care units. Four out of ten coronary units have age limits on the use of anti-clotting drugs after heart attacks, and two-thirds of kidney patients in their seventies are not accepted for dialysis or transplants.

Arthur Bridgeman, 80, of Southampton, and his wife,



Barbara, received letters from their GP's surgery, where they had been registered for more than 30 years, saying they lived too far away to be treated there. Both are fit and healthy for their age. But their doctor had retired and his replacement objected to treating them.

"We had both reached the age of 80 and to me, that felt suspicious. The surgery is about 20 minutes' walk from our house, and the other doctor never had any trouble coming to us," Mr Bridgeman said.

In the financial services sector, Age Concern has heard from a number of pensioners who have been refused deals because of their age. One woman in Hertfordshire was

told she could have interest-free credit to buy a settee and a chair, only to have the offer withdrawn when she revealed that she was in her seventies.

A man who asked his bank for a £15,000 mortgage had his request turned down, but was offered a much more expensive loan. The same bank later offered his granddaughter a bigger mortgage, although she had no permanent job.

Age discrimination does not only affect pensioners. People in their forties often have trouble finding work. Linda Johnson, now 46, was made redundant last year after 25 years as a foreign exchange broker. She says when her company made cut-backs it targeted the over-forties.

Despite her experience Mrs Johnson could not find a suitable full-time job. She signed on with 20 agencies to no avail, and eventually took a part-time secretarial job.

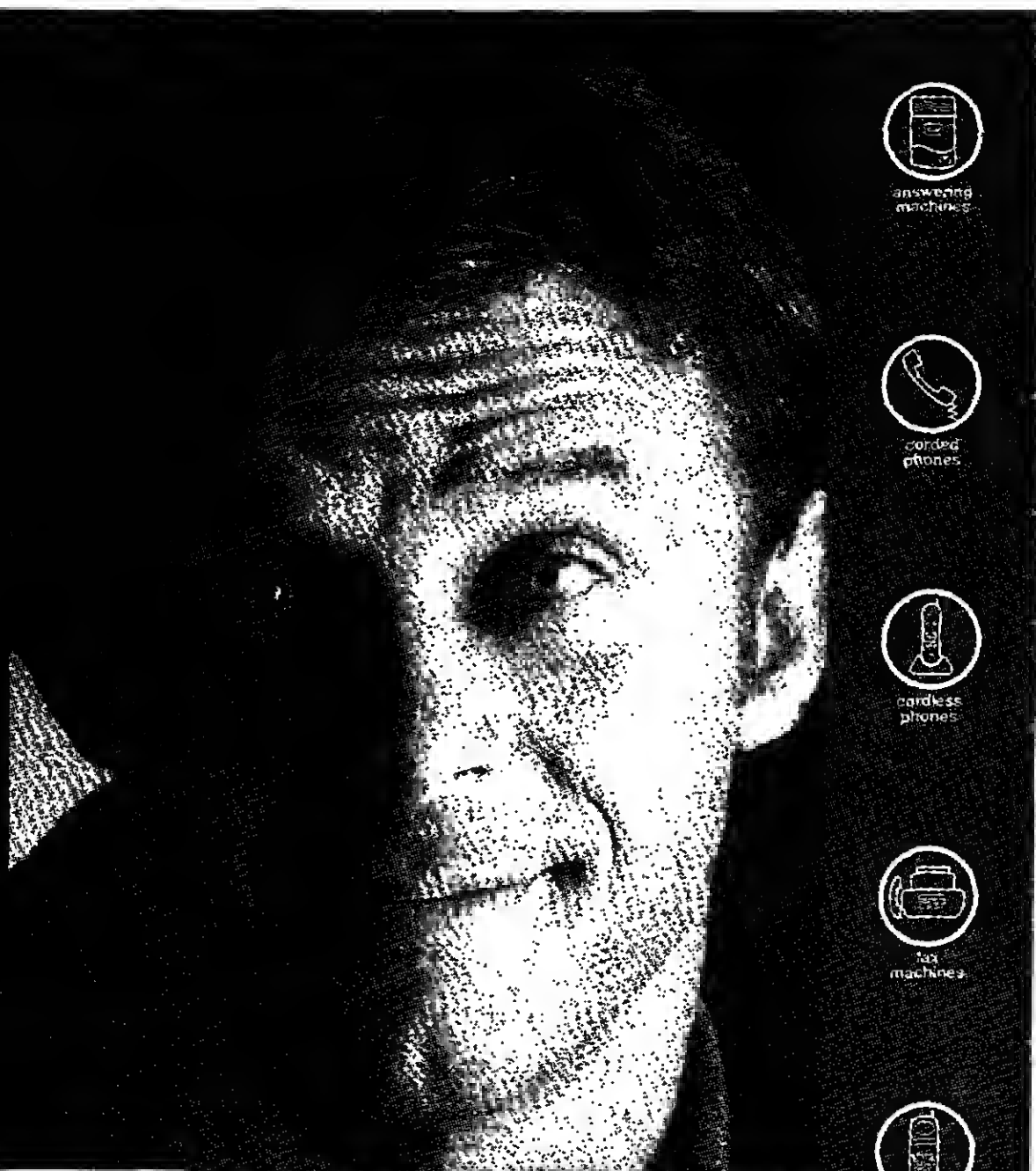
"I went to one place where no one was over 25. I saw job specs which said they would suit people in their twenties or thirties," she said. "Everyone has got to be young these days."



Pearl Reed, whose ad brought huge publicity for Age Concern's anti-discrimination campaign

Nicola Kurtz

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Torrid life of anti-ageists' role model



"It was great fun, and it worked," said Pearl Reed

WHEN Pearl Reed was picked as the model for Age Concern's anti-discrimination campaign a year ago, she thought it would be a straightforward photographic job.

What happened next came as something of a shock. The tabloid press were camped outside her Sussex home for a month as she whirled from one television studio to another. Once, she was even smuggled out in the boot of a car to avoid photographers.

There were two reasons for the intense interest in the 56-year-old. One was Age Concern's decision to splash shots of her Wonderbra-clad breasts above a caption reading: "The first thing some people see is her age." The other was that she was once married to a gangster, Joe Wilkins, and later had a relationship with David Bulstrode, former chairman of Queen's Park Rangers football club.

She had told the charity about her past before the campaign began, but had been hoping it would not become public.

"When a lot of my personal life came out I phoned to apologise because I thought it might be harmful to them. But they were really quite pleased in a way, because it gave them a lot of tabloid coverage," she said.

In fact, the campaign must rate as one of the most cost-effective ever run. The charity

By FRAN ABRAMS

put Pearl's poster on one mobile billboard and relied on the press to do the rest.

It worked splendidly. There were 2,000 responses from the public, 10 solid hours of broadcasting time, hundreds of columns inches and interest from as far afield as Argentina, Italy and Norway. The ad was declared even more successful than the original Wonderbra ad featuring Eva Herzigova.

"It was a big surprise, but it was great," Ms Reed told *The Independent*. "It was great fun, and I was very pleased for Age Concern because they were stepping outside the norm and it worked."

Ms Reed says she understands the campaign because she too has suffered age discrimination when seeking work as an actress and model, often finding it difficult to get invited to castings.

Ironically, the success of the ad has not changed her fortunes dramatically. Companies do not necessarily want to hire someone so closely linked with another organisation, though she has made two short films.

She was invited to a casting for a nude hormone replacement therapy campaign, but decided to turn it down. "I would like to be seen as someone who can do something rather than just get my kit off," she said.

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KEN LIVINGSTONE

Blair at his most charming can get away with murder

IN THE THURSDAY REVIEW PAGE 4



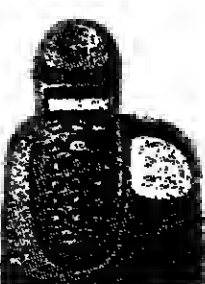
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Sex appeal? It's all down to smell

IT HAS been called the battle of the sexes but now it seems women really do use "chemical warfare" to trick men into believing that they are more attractive than they appear.

Female pheromones - airborne chemical messengers - may have evolved so that they can block a man's ability to judge a woman's attractiveness on the way she looks and the sound of her voice, scientists told the British Psychological Society's London conference yesterday.

But for women taking the contraceptive pill, the biologists from the University of Vienna had bad news - the pill blocks the production of these useful pheromones.

The chemical signals, which affect behaviour and are often used by animals to attract mates, act as a love potion, attracting the man to a woman,

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

although on the basis of sight and sound alone he might not have been interested in her.

There are about 240 different pheromones but only 15 to 20 have as yet been tested. In this study, the scientists exposed a group of 66 young men unknowingly to synthetic vaginal pheromones called copulins. Their reactions to photographs of women and to female voices were compared with what happened when the pheromones were replaced with ordinary water.

When the men had been exposed to copulin they rated the voices and faces as more attractive. Crucially, it equalised previous differences. The less attractive the woman was rated before, the bigger the rise in her perceived attractiveness when

the men had been given copulin.

"The more negative a woman was rated in attractiveness without smell, the more she gained through smell," Professor Karl Grammer said.

He added that the explanation was likely to be an evolutionary one. "[The pheromones] make all females equal," said Professor Grammer. "Women have learned to exploit men for their own advantage... There is a lot of communication going on at a level we are not conscious of."

He also said that the amount of testosterone in the men's saliva increased after they had inhaled the pheromones. Merely by smelling the pheromones the men's ability to process information from their eyes and ears was altered.

Women also altered in the amount of pheromones they produced depending on the stage in their menstrual cycle,

producing most as they approached their most fertile time.

But the professor warned women who took the pill, which inhibited copulin production: "This could have a negative effect on your sexual life."

Another study carried out at the University of Northumbria found that when men and women were knowingly exposed to pheromones from the other sex and were shown a fictional description, they rated them as more sexually and physically attractive. Men were also more likely to see the female character as more likeable, but women did not see the male character as more likeable or even as more intelligent.

The presence of male pheromones made both women and men feel more energetic, and the use of female pheromones made both sexes feel more elated and confident.



Marilyn Monroe lookalikes competing to be selected to model for the new Madame Tussaud's wax portrait this week. According to new research, however, beauty lies not in the eye of the beholder, but in the nose. *Sinead Lynch/AF*

Importance of what's in a name

BEING CALLED Gillian or Amos rather than Stephen or Alison could make the difference between getting a 2:1 and a 2:2 at university, according to a study.

Dr Phil Erwin, of Nene University College, Northampton, has found that people with unattractive or unusual names do "significantly better" at university than those with normal monikers. The downside is that Ethels or Normans can be subject to teasing for years and may "crumble" under the ridicule.

In his study, Dr Erwin looked at examinations and coursework marks for students who had completed the second year of a psychology degree at a British university as well as rating the attractiveness of their names. He said old-fashioned names such as Harold, Norman, Amos, Gillian, Ethel and Pauline were seen as unattractive whereas the more modern Stephen, David, Lucy, Alison and Emma are marked out as attractive.

On average those with names rated as "unattractive" scored at least 3 per cent more. "It may not sound much but in degree classifications it can make the difference between a 2:1 and an average degree," said Dr Erwin. "It can make the difference between a 2:1 and a 2:2 or even a 2:1 and a first."

He said the names he looked at were more old-fashioned than really unusual and so the effect

BY GLENDA COOPER

could be even more marked for someone with a truly outlandish name. "When people have a name that is unattractive it makes you stand out," said Dr Erwin. "It focuses attention on you and people either crumble or do extremely well."

Children who have such names may often have to endure playground teasing and if they survive that they have worked out a survival mechanism for life. "Children are merciless about differences and if you are called Norman you are going to be at the receiving end of a lot of ribbing," said Dr Erwin. "It either toughens you up or you become miserable."

He added: "If you are asked out on a blind date with someone called Norman or Ethel or Stephen or Alison, you would be more likely to accept with the latter names."

The advantage of an unattractive name might also help in the job market, drawing you to the attention of an employer.

However, Dr Erwin said he would not advise parents to saddle their child with an unattractive name in the hopes of them becoming an academic achiever. "Fashions in names do change," he said. "The best thing is to give them two names and then they can decide which one they want to use."

Magistrates' bail decisions erratic

MAGISTRATES ARE frequently inconsistent when making decisions about bail, yet are highly confident that they have made the correct decision.

In a study of more than 80 magistrates, only one-third were consistent when presented with the same case twice, according to research by Dr Mandeep Dhani, a psychologist at City University, London.

Dr Dhani told the British Psychological Society's conference in London that magistrates from 44 courts were given a set of 27 hypothetical cases and asked to make decisions over bail for offences ranging from shoplifting, theft and grievous bodily harm. They were also sent duplicates of seven cases where only the name was changed.

BY GLENDA COOPER

More than two-thirds showed inconsistency in at least one if not more of the cases, and the extent of their experience made no difference.

Men tended to be treated more punitively than women, and magistrates were more likely to be severe if told the police viewed the suspect with hostility or the prosecution argued for harsh treatment.

Dr Dhani said the law needed to be made clearer. "Lay magistrates only work 35 half days a year. It is very difficult for them to develop consistency," she said. "We need reform and stricter guidelines so that they know on what basis to make decisions."

Being a statue a worry for some

IF ASKED to imagine themselves as the Statue of Liberty, some people thought they would have such problems as being cold or being metal. But, a new study has found, people identified as chronic worriers felt that they "would not be up to being a symbol of the United States".

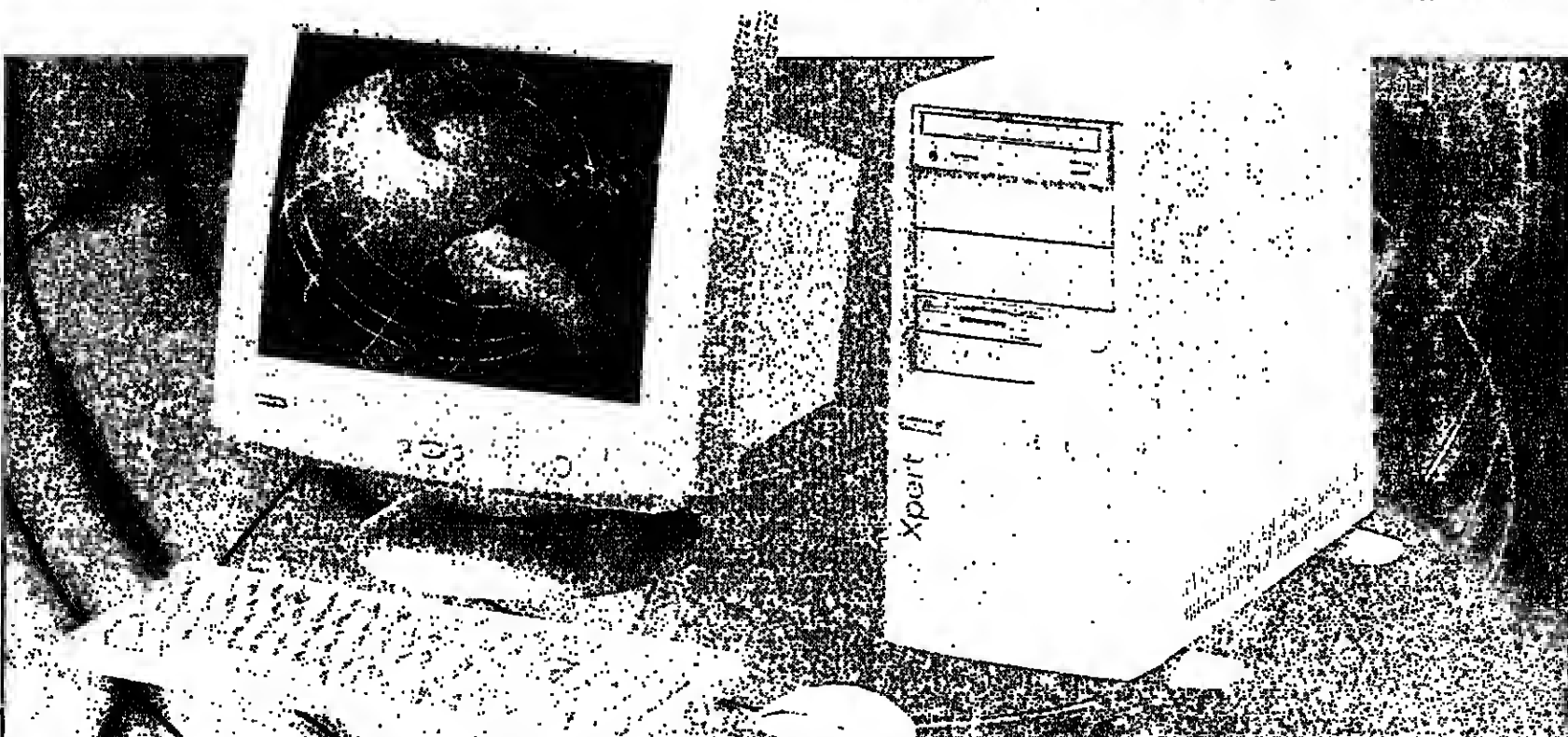
Indeed, the worriers voiced fears of not only being unable to handle the responsibility, but of "having no friends" if they failed, according to Professor Graham Davey, a chartered

psychologist at the University of Sussex, who undertook research into the psychology of worrying. Those more prone to worrying could also think up more reasons why they should worry, and became progressively more anxious.

"They also tended to couch their worries in terms of personal inadequacies," Professor Davey said. "This tendency is an important contributor to the problem."

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Thirty feared dead as Rome flats collapse

BY FRANCES KENNEDY
in Rome

A FOUR-storey apartment block in Rome collapsed into a pile of dust and rubble early yesterday killing 16 people, and trapping more than 30 beneath the debris. Rescue teams worked around the clock to locate survivors. In the afternoon there was a roar of applause as tearful rescue workers pulled out a middle-aged couple. Alberto Viola, who was conscious, had badly shattered legs but was out of danger. His wife, Luciana, underwent surgery for internal injuries and is in intensive care. By late last night, hopes of finding more survivors in what was the modest block in the outer Rome suburb were fading. Emergency workers recovered 16 corpses including three children. One was just a few months old. Fifteen other people are unaccounted for. Renzo Rinaldi, an eyewitness, said: "There was a dull boom. It was like a snowstorm, you couldn't see anything. When the huge cloud of dust cleared there was just a gaping hole where the building once stood. It was as though the earth had opened and swallowed it up." One of the first to arrive was a fireman, Maurizio Fu-

matelli, whose family lived there. He, and neighbours in their pyjamas, began digging with their bare hands. Even after the lifeless bodies of his parents and two brothers were brought out Mr. Fumatelli continued to dig.

Others could only stare and sob as the orange bulldozers lifted off the concrete pillars and twisted metal. Firemen passed out buckets of debris and sniffer dogs nosed the rubble. The causes of the collapse are unclear. Initially a strong smell of gas fuelled reports of an explosion. But the fire service commander, Luigi Abate, said the smell was a consequence, not a cause, of the collapse. "If it had been an explosion, neighbouring buildings would have been damaged but they are intact, including the windows," he said.

Franco Barberi, undersecretary of Civil Protection, said: "From the small quantity of debris, it seems the building simply folded in on itself." Locals sought assurances that the cause was not geological subsidence that might put other homes at risk.

The building dated from the 1950s when housing in Rome went up cheap and fast. Restructuring work was underway in part of the block. "This is a district where they have built illegally without proper planning permission or respect for safety," said an indignant elderly local. "And no one checks what the effect of this is on the building."

Local and central government have promised swift action. On visiting the scene Rosa Russo Jervolino, the Italian Interior Minister, described it as "an enormous tragedy". Francesco Rutelli, the Rome Mayor, said: "If we find that behind this tragedy there is negligence those responsible should be punished severely." He added that that referred to private or public entities. The city council and Rome magistrates have begun inquiries. The Pope was among those to express his condolences during his weekly audience and the Basilica of St John the Lateran is being made available for the funerals of the victims.



Firefighters pulling out a survivor from the building that collapsed in the Italian capital. Andrew Medichini/AP

Calvi's body dug up for tests

AS HIS son and a judge looked on, the body of Roberto Calvi was exhumed in Italy yesterday to determine whether his 1982 death was murder or suicide. Prosecutors hope a new - and fourth - examination of the body will shed light on the death of Calvi, whose corpse was found hanging from Blackfriars Bridge in London, following Italy's biggest post-war banking scandal. Banco Ambrosiano, in which the Vatican bank held a significant stake, collapsed in 1982 when it could not collect \$1.4bn in loans made to companies in Latin America. Calvi, the bank's chairman, was found dead days later.

Calvi's coffin was taken from the family tomb in Drezzo, sealed with lead and loaded on to a hearse for the trip to a morgue in Milan. Judge Ottavio Lupacchini said he was certain forensic medicine could determine the cause of death.

A businessman, Flavio Carboni, has been charged with conspiracy to commit homicide in connection with the case. Prosecutors asked for the exhumation after Mr Carboni's lawyers presented a report based on a preliminary examination of the body that indicated Calvi hanged himself.

"What do I think of the exhumation? It was Carboni's right to seek it in his defence. For us, it's traumatic," said Calvi's son, Carlo Calvi, who came his Montreal home. (AP)

Italian court sets Kurd leader free

THE LEADER of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, whom Turkey wants extradited from Italy as a terrorist, is now technically a free man.

In a ruling that looks likely to worsen the diplomatic crisis between Turkey and Italy, both of which are Nato allies, an appeals court in Rome ruled yesterday that restrictions on Abdullah Ocalan's movements were no longer justified.

The court reached its decision because Germany, which had issued an international arrest warrant for the Kurdish leader, had decided not to request his extradition. However, Mr Ocalan, whose presence in Italy has brought relations between Ankara and Rome to a modern low, is unlikely to be going far for now. His lawyers have confirmed he will stay on at the villa at In-

fernetto, on the coast near Rome, where he has been under house arrest since he arrived here last month. Police guards told to stop him escaping will now have to protect him.

Italy's Prime Minister, Massimo D'Alema, said the court decision will inevitably speed up other decisions regarding Mr Ocalan's fate. He indicated there were two options open to Italy that were "equally difficult". One was to have the PKK leader put on trial at a special court in Italy, while the other was to expel him.

Mr Ocalan has requested political asylum, provoking the wrath of Turkey and a Turkish embargo on imports from Italy. Turkey's ambassador in Rome, Inal Batu, yesterday

asked Italy's foreign ministry for an explanation of the appeal court's ruling.

In Ankara the Defence Minister, Ismet Sezgin, said that the ruling "will damage both Turkish-Italian relations and international law."

The Turkish government holds Mr Ocalan and the PKK responsible for the deaths of more than 29,000 people, killed by Kurdish fighters and Turkish armed forces, in the Kurds' 14-year fight for independence. Mr Ocalan has recently distanced himself from the guerrilla activities of the PKK and called on Europe to force Turkey to enter negotiations over Kurdish grievances.

In an open letter to Mr D'Alema, published by *La Repubblica* newspaper, Mr Ocalan said Rome would be the ideal venue for peace talks.

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Netanyahu orders early elections

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, the Israeli Prime Minister, yesterday opted for early elections rather than face the disintegration of his right-wing coalition government, Israel radio reported yesterday. Polling could take place by the end of February.

Mr Netanyahu chose to go for broke following a day of intensive consultations after the cabinet endorsed his decision to freeze implementation of the Wye Agreement between Israel and the Palestinians.

As a result, Israeli troops will not withdraw on schedule tomorrow from another 5 per cent of the Occupied Territories. Nor will Israel release Palestinian prisoners alleged to have Israeli "blood on their hands", an issue which brought Arab protesters back on the streets last week with stones, petrol bombs and flaming tyres.

Mr Netanyahu acknowledged 10 days ago that he no longer commanded a majority in the 120-member parliament, the Knesset. Voting on a no-confidence motion was put off until next Monday. Government and

BY ERIC SILVER
in Jerusalem

opposition politicians were acting yesterday as if the countdown to the ballot box had already begun.

The Prime Minister had little or no chance of winning over hard-line dissidents, who had vowed to fight the Wye Agreement to the death. Nor was Israel's Labour opposition willing to give Mr Netanyahu a safety net, once it was clear that he was dragging his feet on the Palestinian peace deal.

Yaacov Neeman, the only non-party member of Mr Netanyahu's cabinet, told the Prime Minister he was resigning from the Finance Ministry and returning to his Tel Aviv law practice.

At the same time, aides to the Defence Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, were suggesting privately that the popular former general was about to break ranks and call for new elections as the only way to save the Wye Agreement. Likud insiders speculated that he might challenge Mr Netanyahu for the



Netanyahu: Underestimated resolve of ultra-nationalists

leadership. Mr Mordechai, the most dovish member of the inner security cabinet, distanced himself from the Prime Minister's stubborn insistence on Palestinian reciprocity during President Bill Clinton's three-day visit to Israel, the West Bank and Gaza.

The Defence Minister privately met the US mediator in the Middle East, Dennis Ross, on Tuesday to find a way out of the Wye impasse. Mr Mordechai shares the growing anxiety of Is-

rael's intelligence community that stagnation will lead to mayhem and perhaps to war.

The chief of military intelligence, Major-General Amos Malka, predicted on Tuesday that Palestinian protests over the prisoner releases would not desist. Israel freed 250 last month, but most of them were petty criminals.

"There is no certainty," General Malka told MPs, "that the leadership will be motivated to act against the street. The leadership knows how to ignite the masses, but it does not always know how to control them."

At Wye, Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, seems to have underestimated the emotion generated by this issue when he left the choice of prisoners to Israel - just as Mr Netanyahu underestimated the determination of the ultra-nationalists to bring him down, even if it might usher in a left-wing government that would yield even more to the Palestinians.

A bruising election campaign could paralyse the peace process for months. The Palestinians are in no mood to wait.



Palestinian women in Bethlehem demonstrating for the release of their relatives from Israeli jails Reuters

Orphans in Russia face mass abuse

RUSSIA'S STATE-RUN orphanages are subjecting tens of thousands of children to what it calls "an appalling level of abuse", according to the group Human Rights Watch.

In a report published yesterday, the New York-based organisation says thousands of Russia's 200,000 orphaned or abandoned children are subjected to sexual and physical abuse by staff and older children, undergo hideous punishments, and are kept under a regime of strong sedatives.

The report's author, Kathleen Hunt, said the worst-off were the 30,000 children incarcerated in homes for the disabled. Many, she said, were kept locked in dark rooms, tied down, straitjacketed, or simply left in their beds permanently.

The report said that staff members encouraged abuse by older children, locked children in freezing rooms for days, made them stand in the snow, and punished would-be runaways by sending them to psychiatric hospitals. Some

BY MARCUS TANNER

children simply died of malnourishment, she said.

Ms Hunt insisted that not all staff she had encountered were unkind to children. "Some of the women looking after them do show compassion and concern," she said, "but they suffer from a lack of training."

She said the abysmal conditions described in the report were not simply the result of Russia's economic collapse, but reflected a prejudice against the mentally ill and the disabled.

Ms Hunt said almost half the 15,000 children released each year from the state orphanages end up homeless. Most of these drift into crime, alcoholism or drug addiction.

The organisation called on Russian officials to stop encouraging parents to surrender disabled children to the state, and urged that children's mental states be diagnosed after extensive observation and not in single sessions, as is the usual practice.

Don't you want to stick it in the slot sir?



IN BRIEF

Award for Kosovo Albanian chief
THE EUROPEAN Parliament yesterday awarded its £10,000 Sakharov human rights prize to the leader of the Kosovo Albanians, Ibrahim Rugova, for his peaceful opposition to Serbian rule.

Liechtenstein denies looting art
THE TINY principality of Liechtenstein rejected as false allegations made in an official Swiss report last week that its ruler, Prince Franz Josef, acquired Nazi-looted art in the Second World War.

Peruvian pigs dine on in-flight food
PIGS IN Peru are being fed with left-overs smuggled illegally from planes landing at Lima's international airport. The law stipulates all airline refuse must be incinerated to stop disease.

DAVID LISTER
We may love the arts in this country but we don't seem terribly keen on artists
IN THE THURSDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

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Icy wind snuffs 'Peking Spring'

BEHIND the closed doors of a courtroom in the eastern city of Hangzhou, the Chinese government will today draw a firm line under a year when freedom of political thought had appeared briefly to gain ground.

In the most high-profile case against a dissident for three years, Wang Youcai, a 32-year-old former student activist, will go on trial for allegedly "inciting the subversion of state power".

About 300 miles away in the city of Wuhan, his associate, 49-year-old Qin Yongmin, will walk into another court to face similar charges. After the optimism of a so-called "Peking Spring" has come the chill wind of a winter crackdown.

The two men will be found guilty - there has never been a non-guilty judgment in such a case - and will receive punitive jail terms for their attempts over six months to register the independent China Democracy Party.

Xu Wenli, the 55-year-old veteran dissident who was also arrested last month, has yet to be charged but may suffer the same fate. Almost three dozen other dissident figures have also been questioned or detained since the beginning of November.

Today's trials are a blunt reminder that, while the legal system is improving, it counts for nothing for dissidents such as Mr Wang and Mr Qin. A lawyer who wanted to defend Mr Wang has been harassed by police to such an extent that he has abandoned the attempt. Mr Qin's family were given only three days' notice of his trial, leaving them no time to try to organise a defence.

To prevent demonstrations

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

outside Mr Wang's trial, police in Hangzhou took seven local China Democracy Party members into custody on Tuesday and warned others not to travel to the city.

The response of the outside world has been muted. This year has been one of diplomatic triumph for China, when the leadership in Peking secured repeated praise from Western leaders for its response to the Asian financial crisis.

The dissidents' names are not known in Western capitals. It was at the start of President Bill Clinton's visit in June that Mr Wang and colleagues tried to register the China Democracy Party in Zhejiang province, and the American President spoke out publicly when he and other dissidents were detained for questioning.

In October, Tony Blair was embarrassed on his China trip when Mr Xu was taken in by police. The Prime Minister immediately raised the case with his hosts. On both occasions, the dissidents were swiftly released to avoid causing political difficulties at home for the foreign statesmen.

In the second half of the year, following the Clinton tour, China played host to more than half a dozen European leaders and the United Nations human rights chief, Mary Robinson.

During this period, dissidents were picked up for a few days or a couple of weeks, but most were then released. There was regular contact across the country between activists involved in the China Democracy Party, the sort of co-



Hu Jiang-xia (top), the wife of Wang Youcai (bottom left) awaiting the trial of her husband and Qin Yongmin (centre) for attempting to register the China Democracy Party. Xu Wenli (right) is in jail but has yet to be charged

ordination which had not been seen since the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown. News of their activities, and detentions, regularly reached the outside world, mainly through a Hong Kong-based human rights group.

But now the run of foreign visitors has come to an end and the goalposts have moved, as is demonstrated by the timing of the current crackdown.

Tomorrow, China officially celebrates the 20th anniversary of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms which rescued the country from the tragedy of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. The government may be beset by economic challenges, but it can justifiably claim that those

policies have improved the living standards of the vast majority of its population. Yet by scheduling the trial of the two dissidents for today, the rest of the world's attention will once again be diverted to China's human rights shortcomings.

At the beginning of the year, it was all going to be so different. With President Jiang Zemin firmly ensconced after 1997's 15th Communist Party Congress, it seemed that there was more scope for political debate. Individual academics, journalists, and even the odd official started publishing papers and books addressing political reform. Intellectuals felt free to gather in informal discussion groups. There was talk of a

Struggling for success in a dirty business

FRONTLINE
HONG KONG

THE LITTLE Dutch boy putting his finger in the dyke trying to stop the floods has about as much chance as Mr Tse Chin-wah of holding back the avalanche of pollution in Hong Kong, which is making Britain's former colony an increasingly bad place to live.

Mr Tse, a senior environmental protection official, is fighting against the odds and today we are standing at the most notorious part of the battleground in Causeway Bay, a popular shopping area in the centre of Hong Kong.

Boxes on the side of the road monitor the air quality. They regularly report choking levels of pollution so bad that passers-by have to cover their faces in a vain attempt to fend off the muck that descends from the skies.

Hong Kong is simply too crowded. The city has the highest concentration of vehicles anywhere on earth and the buildings are so tightly packed that the air cannot circulate freely.

The government has been issuing daily bulletins giving the air pollution index since 1996. At the best times, Causeway Bay scores 60 points. This signifies that the air quality is not exactly bad but could produce illness over the long term. Generally, however, the score hovers just below 100 points. Above that, people with heart and respiratory problems are advised to keep well away. At worst, Causeway Bay hits the 160 point mark. Then it is a very unpleasant place indeed.

Causeway Bay also borders Victoria Harbour, famous for the extraordinary skyline surrounding it and junks floating past ocean-going liners. What the tourists pictures do not, and cannot, show is the colour and smell of the water, especially the waters in the Causeway Bay typhoon shelter, where floating gin palaces

nestle against wooden fishing vessels and rundown boats serve as home for old seafaring families.

In the company of David Wong and his Environmental Protection Department colleagues we bob up and down in a tiny sampan to get a bird's eye view of the polluted mess.

Although it does not look too bad, the smell tells another story. The storm drains on the edge of the harbour are supposed to be for rain water. But many waste disposal drains have been illegally linked up to them. Mr Wong's team of investigators are engaged in a time consuming task of identifying where the polluters are located.

The inspectors have some success. However, when we inspect an open sewer designed for storm water I see how difficult the task is. Suddenly the water pouring through the drain turns murky brown. Mr Wong declares that it must be coming from a nearby building site breaking the rules of water disposal. Mobile phones are quickly deployed to get an inspector on the job and find the culprit. It seems another case of putting sticking plasters over a gaping wound.

Protests over the government's lack of enthusiasm for tackling pollution problems are mounting. But there are limits to what the authorities can do. Hong Kong is situated on the tip of China's industrial heartland. Airborne and waterborne pollution knows no boundaries.

Mr Tse looks up. Above him the sky turns into a murky glow as a heady mix of pollutants get together and descend over the territory. "I'm not saying it's not bad, but it's improving," says Mr Tse.

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Reuters launches £1bn bond

REUTERS, the information group, has signed a £1bn European Medium Term Note bond programme which will be listed on the London Stock Exchange. Reuters said the move was part of its plan to improve the efficiency of its capital structure. The bond will sit alongside the group's existing banking facilities.

A spokesman said the programme would give Reuters the flexibility to tap the medium-term public debt markets. Shares in Reuters closed up 37p at 577.5p.

Virgin loses Moscow route right



RICHARD BRANSON yesterday questioned the Government's commitment to airline competition after his airline, Virgin, lost the right to operate flights from London to Moscow.

Rival airline British Midland won an appeal against a UK Civil Aviation Authority decision to award Virgin a licence to fly on the route, which became available as part of an

Anglo-Russian agreement to break the current British Airways-Aeroflot duopoly.

Virgin said it planned to appeal against the Moscow decision to John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister (pictured), who ordered the CAA to re-hear the licensing application following British Midland's appeal. This is the first time the Government has in effect over-ruled the CAA, and means that Virgin has lost three route applications in the last 12 months. Virgin lost the rights to fly to Las Vegas, US, and to Cape Town, South Africa, on both routes losing to BA. A decision is expected next week on the tussle between the two carriers to operate the new Shanghai route.

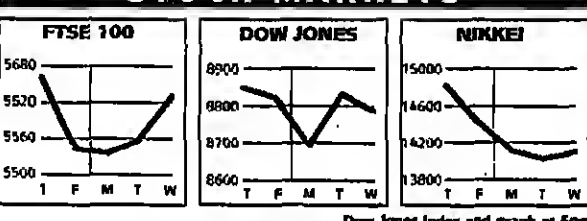
Go-Ahead on track in Sweden

GO-AHEAD GROUP, the bus and train operator, took its first step outside the United Kingdom yesterday when it won a £200m contract to operate commuter trains in Sweden.

Go-Ahead, which operates London's Thameslink rail service, won the five-year contract from the Stockholm transit authority after submitting a joint bid with VIA-CTI, its French partner, and the Swedish private rail company BK Tag.

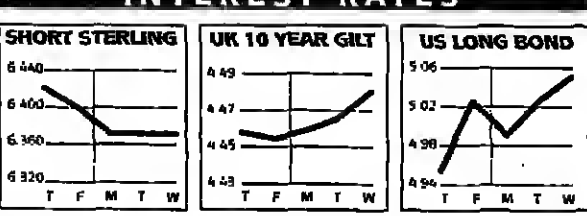
The deal signals Go-Ahead's determination to look for new expansion opportunities now that the UK bus and train franchises have largely been carved up.

STOCK MARKETS



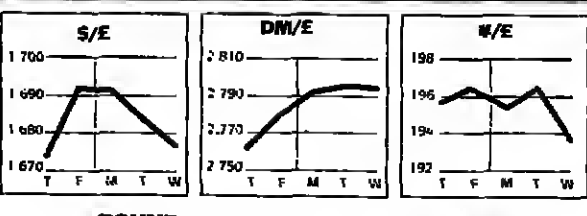
Index	Close	Change	Change %	52 wk high	52 wk low	Vol
FTSE 100	5630.40	73.30	1.32	6183.70	4593.20	3.24
FTSE 250	4699.60	8.30	0.18	5970.90	4210.40	4.93
FTSE 350	2657.40	29.80	1.13	2969.10	2210.40	3.58
FTSE All Share	2564.54	4.40	0.17	2986.52	2143.53	3.63
FTSE SmallCap	200.10	0.23	0.12	213.40	183.40	4.18
FTSE Euronext	1121.10	1.10	0.10	1517.10	1046.20	0.02
FTSE AIM	794.90	-2.20	-0.28	1146.90	761.30	0.02
FTSE Euronext 100	931.05	11.71	1.27			
Dow Jones	8792.40	-33.47	-0.38	9390.20	7400.30	1.70
Nikkei	14096.30	85.11	0.61	17352.95	12787.90	1.04
Hang Seng	9935.39	-13.45	-0.14	11926.16	6344.79	3.13
Dax	4663.45	88.95	1.94	6217.83	3833.71	1.91

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 months	6 months	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	30 year
UK	6.37	5.86	5.66	5.09	4.48	4.18	4.35	4.90
US	5.23	4.68	4.00	3.00	4.61	4.61	5.05	5.05
Japan	0.48	0.27	0.53	0.19	1.90	0.41	2.22	0.31
Germany	3.32	0.43	3.19	0.85	3.88	1.41	4.73	1.13

CURRENCIES



Index	Close	Change	Change %	10 day	1 month	3 month	1 year
£/\$	1.6763	-0.0091	-0.54	1.6811	1.6811	1.6811	1.6811
£/¥	167.63	-0.91	-0.54	168.11	168.11	168.11	168.11
£/€	1.9368	-0.02	-1.03	1.9568	1.9568	1.9568	1.9568
£/A\$	1.5050	-0.02	-1.33	1.5250	1.5250	1.5250	1.5250

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Change	Change %	10 day	1 month	3 month	1 year
Brent Oil (\$)	10.65	0.81	8.16	10.65	10.65	10.65	10.65
Gold (\$)	294.45	1.50	0.51	294.45	294.45	294.45	294.45
Silver (\$)	4.94	0.07	1.44	4.94	4.94	4.94	4.94

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.6110	Mexican (nuevo peso)	15.27
Austria (schillings)	19.05	Netherlands (guilders)	3.0552
Belgium (francs)	56.01	New Zealand (\$)	3.0916
Canada (\$)	2.5353	Norway (krone)	12.76
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8012	Portugal (escudos)	275.45
Denmark (krone)	10.39	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.1531
Finland (markka)	8.2631	Singapore (\$)	2.6614
France (francs)	9.1033	Spain (pesetas)	230.36
Germany (marks)	2.7220	South Africa (rand)	9.7750
Greece (drachmas)	456.47	Sweden (krone)	13.21
Hong Kong (\$)	12.69	Switzerland (francs)	2.2005
Ireland (pounds)	1.0906	Thailand (bahts)	56.40
India (rupees)	64.57	Turkey (liras)	4961.78
Israel (shekels)	6.4791	USA (\$)	1.6492
Italy (lire)	2699		
Japan (yen)	191.67		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.1361		
Malta (lire)	0.6109		

RJB strikes £1bn coal deal with PowerGen

THE FUTURE of the British coal industry was secured yesterday after RJB Mining, the country's biggest producer, signed a £1bn deal with PowerGen to supply 35 million tonnes of coal over the next five years.

Coming after earlier deals with National Power and Eastern, the two other big coal-fired generators, this agreement will guarantee the future of most of RJB's 15 deep mines and its

9,000-strong workforce. Industry sources said, however, that RJB still needs to tie up additional top-up deals with National Power to avoid cutbacks at some of its collieries in Yorkshire.

The deals with the generators follow the moratorium imposed by the Government on approvals for further gas-fired power stations, which have eaten away a large part of the market for coal.

RJB has contracts to supply the three generators with 81 million tonnes between now and March 2003. For each of the next three years it will supply the generators with about 31 million tonnes of coal, compared with the 26 million tonnes supplied in 1997-98, the last year of the guaranteed contracts agreed at the time of British Coal's privatisation.

Shares in RJB climbed by 6 per cent to 71.5p as the City welcomed the news of the contracts, which are thought to have been priced at around £1.20 a gigajoule - 20 per cent below the price of the old contracts.

Richard Budge, chief executive of RJB, said: "This contract underpins the Government's objective of maintaining a diverse energy mix for power generation and is very good news for job security."

Nick Baldwin, PowerGen's director of UK operations, said the deal with RJB had reduced its exposure to the risks of buying coal on the international market where supplies are less secure.

In addition to the 35 million tonnes for PowerGen, RJB is supplying 28 million tonnes to Eastern between this year and 2003 and 18 million tonnes to National Power over the three years to 2001.

Over the past 12 months RJB has reduced its production capacity with the closure of three pits - Asfordby, Bilsthorpe and Point of Ayr. Together the pits produced about 4 million tonnes a year.

Mandelson gives £150m boost to entrepreneurs

BY MICHAEL HARRISON AND ANDREW GRICE

PETER MANDELSON yesterday unveiled his long-awaited blueprint for revitalising British business, announcing 75 initiatives to help build a "knowledge-driven economy" including a £150m enterprise fund for start-up companies.

But the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's White Paper on competitiveness was immediately attacked for containing nothing new and discriminating against traditional industries such as engineering.

In addition to the new Enterprise Fund, which will support the financing of small businesses with growth potential, there will also be an increase in the DTT's innovation budget, a refocusing of regional aid towards hi-tech schemes, measures to promote electronic commerce and greater commercial exploitation of scientific research.

Mr Mandelson also floated plans to review existing merger regulation, make it easier for failed entrepreneurs to start up in business again and reform the planning system to encourage the development of "clusters" of hi-tech industries.

To begin with, the Science Minister, Lord Sainsbury, will lead a team to promote industrial clusters in biotechnology. Unveiling his White Paper in the Commons, Mr Mandelson said it was a "wake up call to the nation". He said: "Our industrial performance still lags well behind the United States and our European partners, despite all the privatisations and trade union reforms of our predecessors' 18 years."

The Blair Government would steer a new path between the planning of the 1960s and 1970s and the laissez-faire of the 1980s, which had both failed, said Mr Mandelson. It would work with the grain of markets,

use its regulatory powers to promote competition; encourage businesses to collaborate more efficiently and invest in skills and technological awareness.

The Department of Trade and Industry would perform three key roles: invest in Britain's world-class science and knowledge base; do more to convert this into hard commercial success, and "lead a crusade to develop in Britain the spirit of enterprise, so characteristic of the US, so that we seize the new opportunities before us."

However, John Redwood, the Conservative trade spokesman, said the statement contained nothing because the



Eye on industry: Mr Mandelson talking to workers at Harlow Sheet Metal in Harlow, Essex yesterday. Brian Harris

THE MAIN MEASURES

- Enterprise Fund worth £150m to support start-up businesses.
- Innovation budget increased by 20 per cent to £200m.
- New Paradigm Partnerships to commercialise scientific research.
- Ten new industry forums to promote best practice.

- Reform of regional aid to target hi-tech projects.
- Lord Sainsbury to promote biotechnology clusters.
- A million small businesses wired to Internet by 2002.
- Reviews of mergers regulation and skills programmes.
- Reform of insolvency laws to help entrepreneurs who have gone bankrupt.

Government's policies on competitiveness had already been announced by Gordon Brown in last month's pre-Budget report. He told Mr Mandelson: "The Emperor has no clothes."

The Chancellor calls the shots. He's stolen the Trade Secretary's garments."

David Chidgey, industry spokesman for the Liberal Democrats, said the White Paper

was "high on style and pretty fine on ideas, but the key question is going to be, will it fall short on action?"

The Confederation of British Industry gave the White Paper a broad welcome, saying it would help provide the right climate for business success. But the Engineering Employers' Federation, while supporting many of the initiatives, urged Mr Mandelson not to abandon existing engineering firms by focusing support on just the hi-tech growth sector.

Some MPs were worried that Mr Mandelson's plans to make it easier for bankrupt businessmen to start new firms would be a "cheat's charter". Outlook, page 19

Kingspan executive quits after confidentiality breach

THE DEPUTY chairman of the Irish building products group, Kingspan, resigned yesterday after admitting that he could have been responsible for "a breach of confidentiality" in the run-up to yesterday's announcement of a £27m takeover of rival British group, Hewitson.

Brendan Murtagh, a co-founder of the company, tendered his resignation after the company investigated circumstances surrounding certain recent dealings in the shares of Hewitson by persons connected with Mr Murtagh.

The company said that

BY SIMON DUKE

Hewitson shares had been purchased by the wife of one of Mr Murtagh's sons, and by a close friend of another son, after the companies signed a confidentiality agreement in takeover talks in early November.

After Mr Murtagh became aware of the trades later in November he advised his sons to arrange for the sale of the shares. The board of Kingspan, who were informed of the trading on 10 December by company broker ABN Amro, reported the matter to the Takeover Panel and Stock Exchange.

The company said that

"The board is satisfied that while Mr Brendan Murtagh may inadvertently have disclosed confidential information to his sons, he did not encourage them to deal in Hewitson's shares, nor did he envisage that they would do so." Kingspan said yesterday.

Mr Murtagh, who owns about 8 per cent of the company, will continue as a marketing executive for Kingspan, but will no longer sit on the board. By close of trading yesterday, shares in Hewitson had risen by 5 per cent to 195p, while shares in Kingspan had gained 5p to close at 165p.

Standard enters mortgage market

STANDARD CHARTERED Bank, the banking arm of the Standard Life insurance company, is entering the mortgage market next month, writes Clifford German.

It will undercut all the leading banks and building societies by offering variable rate loans at 6.8 per cent, with a further discount of 2 per cent for the first six months.

The new mortgage brand will be called Freestyle. Standard Chartered has set itself an ambitious target of lending more than £1bn in its first year, taking it straight into the leading 10 UK mortgage lenders

with a 4 per cent of the market.

Freestyle will offer loans of up to 90 per cent of value. Mortgage offers will be based on an assessment of what borrowers can afford rather than fixed multiples of annual incomes.

Among other attractions, customers will be given a verbal decision on how much the bank will lend in a few minutes. There will be no arrangement fees or mortgage indemnity guarantee charges on large loans.

The announcement will wrong-foot the major lenders that reduced their variable rate loans to 7.75 per cent last week. Outlook, page 19

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

BLUE CHIPS led the way, with Footsie up 73.3 points to 5,630.4 in active trading. Supporting shares managed modest headway.

Publisher Reed International led the charge on rumours that Microsoft might buy a stake in its Dutch partner, Elsevier. Reed rose 34p to 476p; it was 716p earlier this year. New tension over Iraq helped ml shares: BP rose 21p to 876.5p, although stories circulated that the US Federal Trade Commission wants more concessions before accepting the merger with Amoco. Derek Pain, page 23

NEW YORK

STOCKS FELL for the sixth session in seven, as Minnesota Mining became the 10th Dow member to issue a profit warning. In mid-afternoon trading the Dow had fallen 0.7 per cent to 8,780.

Caterpillar, the construction equipment maker, also warned that profits would be down: its shares plunged 3 per cent.

Internet companies continued to surge, with Amazon.Com gaining 19 per cent to a high of \$289 after an influential analyst said the shares could reach \$400 by the end of next year.

TOKYO

JAPANESE stocks rose for the first session in five days as electronics and other computer-related companies climbed on the back of Wall Street's rally. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index ended up 85.11 points, or 0.7 per cent at 14,096.3.

Sony led the way with a 2.2 per cent gain, while Hitachi soared 5 per cent. Bank stocks fell for a third successive day as investors continue to worry about the fate of their investments in the failed Nippon Credit Bank, which the government forcibly nationalised at the weekend.

HONG KONG

WITH MOST investors sitting on the sidelines awaiting news of President Clinton's impeachment and direction from Wall Street, the Hang Seng ended a shade lower at 9,939, down 0.1 per cent on the day.

Cheung Kong Holdings, Hong Kong's biggest property developer, rose 1.4 per cent on expectations that confidence would be restored to the real estate market as interest rates fall. Sun Hung Kai Properties, another developer, rose 2.3 per cent.

SAO PAULO

BRAZILIAN stocks were sharply lower in early afternoon trading as dips on Wall Street and in Asian investors into a spin. By early afternoon the benchmark Bovespa index had fallen 7 per cent to 6,450.

Traders said the market was deeply concerned at the uncertainty over President Cardoso's budget and tax plans. The market has lost over 50 per cent of its value since the Russian financial crisis erupted earlier in the year. Telecom Brazil was yesterday's biggest loser, down 6 per cent on the day.

MILLENN

ABOUT ONE in three Britain's largest companies already been hit by the millennium computer bug, according to the annual report of a government watchdog. Many big businesses have found that their computer networks are incapable of planning for the next year. One recent case of a Halifax financial group sent out letters to customers off

150 من الاموال

Business needs more than rhetoric

PETER MANDELSON asks us to put aside our cynicism and embrace his vision of the "knowledge-driven economy" with the same gusto that accompanied its unveiling in the House of Commons yesterday. The problem is we have been here before - with Lord Young a decade ago, with Michael Heseltine in the more recent past and just a month ago with the Chancellor, who appears to have stolen much of Mr Mandelson's thunder in his pre-Budget statement.

David Young turned the Department of Trade into the Department for Enterprise and Hezza invented a veritable cottage industry in competitiveness White Papers, benchmarking and all. Now they have transfigured into the present Secretary of State, who has borrowed liberally from his two predecessors, stuck the word "digital" in front and made it sound all terribly sexy and New Labour.

The truth is that for all the Faraday Partnerships and Technology Champions schemes, there is precious little new money behind Mr Mandelson's initiatives (for which we should perhaps be thankful). Nor is there as much original thinking as nine different press releases and three separate reports would have



OUTLOOK

us believe. Some of the ideas are positively dangerous - such as easing the restrictions which prevent bankrupt businessmen jumping back into life. And some sound dangerously contradictory - like promoting competition as the main driver of modern, efficient markets on the one hand and then urging firms to collaborate on the other. Any businessman with a good idea that makes money is going to want to keep the secret to himself.

But on the whole the confection served up yesterday is fairly harmless. Putting Lord Sainsbury in charge of the drive to create more biotechnology "clusters" (another of those Mandelsonisms) seems as

good a way as any of keeping him out of trouble elsewhere.

But the best thing governments can do to encourage greater competitiveness is to stop interfering with the way business operates and where ever possible, to deregulate, liberalise and reduce the burden of state inspired red tape.

Unfortunately, at the same time as Mr Mandelson is pledging to work with the grain of business, his government is being industry up in even more knots - the minimum wage, fairness at work legislation and now the stakeholder pension proposals.

To be fair to Mr Mandelson, his approach is as much about changing attitudes and changing culture, which, in Britain, remains ambivalent, if not hostile, towards entrepreneurship. Mr Mandelson is dead right to want to encourage a sea-change in attitudes. The problem is that this is a process which takes decades, rather than one, or even two parliamentary lifetimes.

But maybe, just maybe, the times are indeed a changin'. A recent survey of youth attitudes showed that most aspired to be millionaires by their mid-thirties. If the entrepreneurial dam is about to break in a way that this finding suggests, then

Mr Mandelson could be riding the wave at just the right time.

UBS/CGIP

THE DISCOUNT to net asset value that British investment trust shares have begun to trade at seems bad enough, but as this column pointed out yesterday, this apparent anomaly has got nothing on French industrial holding companies. As if on cue, Warburg Dillon Read yesterday forked out £300m to buy 10 per cent stakes in the inter-linked Marine-Wendel and CGIP, presumably with the intention of helping to unlock some of the hidden value that lies within them.

The names mean nothing, but the sort of companies they are invested in do. All are top-drawer names. CGIP, for instance, owns 30 per cent of the IT services company Cap Gemini and a similar percentage of Europe's top automotive components group, Valeo. CGIP is half owned by Marine-Wendel, which in turn is a half owned by Wendel-Participations, a family holding company.

The French have a wonderful name for this type of capital structure; it is known as a cascade and

although pretty much anathema to Anglo-Saxon investors, it is common enough across the Continent.

These structures obviously have their advantages to those at the top of the cascade, but lower down it results in some quite staggering discounts - 36 per cent in CGIP's case and more than 40 per cent with Marine-Wendel. Fortunately, CGIP's chairman, Ernest Antoine Seilliere, one of France's leading industrialists, seems as keen on correcting this position as his new City shareholders, so he might be prepared to work with them in attempting to do so.

Either way, as European capital markets converge, those clever City investment bankers seem to have discovered a new way of turning base metal into gold. Last year it was the euro-bond convergence play. Next year it looks like being these Continental holding companies. If enough people start recognising the value, realising it will in case become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Standard Life

ESTABLISHED BANKS and building societies must be starting to get seriously worried. In the past they

could rely on customer apathy and lack of competition to sustain their fat profit margins. On both counts, things are changing with a speed few could have anticipated.

Customer loyalty has already all but vanished; the only thing that holds customers to their established provider of financial services these days is the cost and inconvenience of moving. The new generation of low cost operators are now beginning to remove these road blocks too.

Having already made a splash with its new bank, Standard Life yesterday launched into the mortgage market with a target of taking 4 per cent of net new mortgages within a year. From a standing start, that would put Standard Life on a par in terms of new business with established mortgage providers such as the Woolwich and Abbey National.

This would be a quite astonishing speed of entry into any market, let alone that of mortgages. Certainly nothing like it has been seen in the mortgage market since the banks decided to bust the building society cartel in the early 1980s. In the end, however, the banks ended up charging the same as the building societies, so it was neither here nor there for the mortgage holder.

This time round things look like being different. The initial Standard Life offering seems to be as competitive as anything else around - a floating rate of 4.8 per cent for the first six months, 6.8 per cent thereafter and no penalty clauses for chucking it in and remortgaging after a year. Fixed rate and cap & collar mortgages are promised for the future. Furthermore, Standard Life is prepared to approve a mortgage "in a matter of minutes" over the phone, taking the pain of remortgaging out of the process.

The degree to which the new low cost operators, without the big branch networks of the banks and building societies to support, take market share from the established players seems to be limited only by their ability to cope with demand and provide the necessary capital backing.

All of which will further increase the pressure on banks and building societies to address their bloated cost bases by merging. Perhaps the most surprising thing about all this, given the obvious threat to profits and margins, is that the merger process is taking so long to get under way. The Standard Life initiative cannot help but provide an extra spur.

News Analysis: The UK should escape outright recession, but only just, experts predict

Forecasts for 1999 are getting gloomier

IT'S DIFFICULT to find anyone who is upbeat about the economic outlook next year. Independent forecasters have cut their estimates for growth yet again, according to figures published yesterday by the Treasury, with the consensus now considerably more gloomy than the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

More downgrades are on the cards in the coming weeks. On Monday, for example, both the International Monetary Fund and the Centre for Economics and Business Research - two of the non-City forecasters included in the Treasury's most recent publication - are expected to cut their predictions for growth. So just how bad will 1999 be?

Most forecasters still believe the UK will avoid recession next year, but only just. On average, independent experts expect gross domestic product (GDP) - the most generally accepted measure of economic growth - to increase by just 0.8 per cent next year. This compares with an expected growth rate for 1998 of 2.6 per cent.

So even if the UK manages to avoid a technical recession - that is, at least two consecutive quarters of negative GDP growth - the economic environment will be considerably tougher in 1999 than in any year since 1992.

The deterioration in the domestic economic outlook over the last few months also makes the official Treasury forecasts - which put economic growth for next year at between 1 per cent and 1.5 per cent - look increasingly optimistic. Just 14 of the 44 independent forecasters surveyed by the Treasury expect growth to be 1 per cent or higher. Only two expect growth of 1.5 per cent or higher.

Among the most pessimistic

By LEA PATERSON

He says: "The sector has faced high interest rates and also a strong exchange rate. The CBI survey [one of the most respected surveys of manufacturing confidence] is predicting a situation at least as bad as the last recession. I'm predicting a 3.5 per cent fall in manufacturing output. I'd say you could see 400,000 to 500,000 manufacturing jobs lost."

The fall-off in consumer spending will be a key determinant of the depth of the downturn, according to Mr Weatherby. He believes consumer spending will fall rapidly next year, and the economy will experience a mild recession, before bouncing back towards the end of the year.

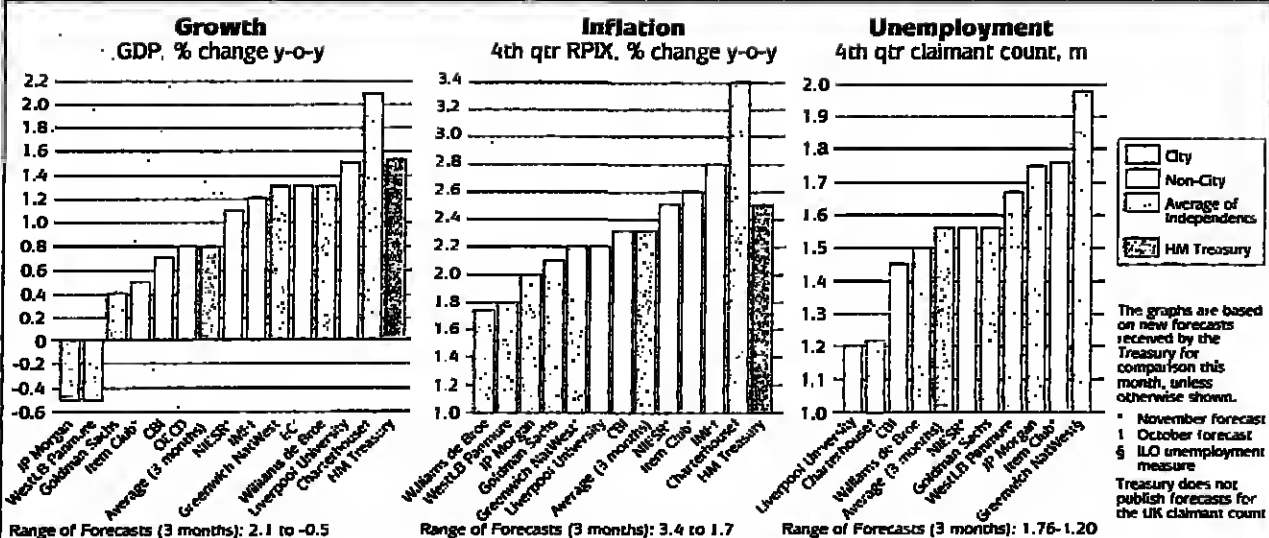
Weaker-than-expected consumer spending also lies behind the gloomy forecasts from Deutsche Bank and the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR). Mark Wall at Deutsche Bank is predicting no growth at all for next year, and fears that the economy could even contract in the last quarter of 1998, primarily because of the marked deterioration in consumer confidence. "The risks to our forecast are certainly on the downside", he says.

Nervous consumers and poor high street sales are also a factor in the decision of Doug Williams at the CEPR to cut his 1999 forecasts. According to the most recently published figures, the CEPR estimates the economy will grow by 0.7 per cent next year, in line with the industry average. But on Monday, the CEPR will issue new forecasts, and is expected to warn that the economy will slip into a recession - albeit a mild one - in 1999.

Despite the deterioration in the domestic economy, only a minority of forecasters are



INDEPENDENT FORECASTS FOR 1999



a "soft landing" - a relatively gentle slowdown in economic growth - is still a possibility.

Geoff Dicks at Greenwich NatWest is among the bulls. He predicts that the economy will grow by 1.3 per cent next year, in line with the more optimistic Treasury forecasts. According to Mr Dicks, the UK economy is set for a difficult six months, but recent cuts in interest rates - the Bank of England has cut rates by 1.25 percentage points in the last three months - should help ensure growth picks up again towards the end of 1999.

Inflation will dip below the Government's target next year, partly because of rate hikes earlier this year, but the recent monetary loosening should see inflation return to target in the year 2000, according to Mr Dicks.

The most optimistic forecaster is Richard Jeffrey at Charterhouse, who believes the economy will grow by 2.1 per cent next year, far more than expected by the Government, and only slightly weaker than the 1998 growth rate. According to Mr Jeffrey, the economic gloom and doom has been overdone, not least by the media.

He says: "My feeling is that consumer spending will probably turn out to be stronger than other people are predicting. Consumer personal income is growing. We've never had as many people in employment as at the moment, and, on average, I don't think that employment next year will be lower than this year."

Mr Jeffrey believes recent

falls in consumer confidence are temporary, and were caused, at least in part, by gloomy newspaper headlines.

The flipside of his upbeat predictions for growth is stronger-than-expected inflation. He expects the underlying rate of inflation targeted by the Bank of England to hit 3.4 per cent by the end of next year. That compares with a consensus prediction of just 2.3 per cent, marginally below the Bank's 2.5 per cent target.

So recession in 1999 is still only an outside possibility, according to the independent experts, although most believe the risks are on the increase. What seems certain, though, is that 1999 will not be as easy as 1998, particularly for Britain's manufacturers.

BT puts up £3m to keep Ionica on line

BRITISH TELECOM has come to the rescue of Ionica, its former rival, amid fears that the ailing telecoms company would suddenly collapse and leave 62,000 customers scrambling to find a new telephone supplier.

BT is putting up £3m to keep Ionica's network up and running until 28 February, when it will be switched off. In the meantime, BT will contact all Ionica's customers in an attempt to encourage them to switch to its network.

BT said it had put up the cash in order to ensure an "orderly transition" from Ionica to other telephone providers. "We wanted to avoid a sudden shutdown," a BT spokesman said. "It would be a catastrophe for us if 60,000 people were all trying to get a BT line at the same time."

The deal is the final humiliation for Ionica, once thought to be best placed to mount a serious challenge BT in the residential telecoms market. The firm, founded by Nigel Playford and valued at £540m when it floated on the stock exchange in July 1997, was placed in administration in October after last-ditch attempts to mount a rescue collapsed.

PricewaterhouseCoopers, administrators to Ionica, have written to the group's customers to inform them of the deal. "In spite of significant interest shown by a number of parties in acquiring the business, regrettably I have been unable to conclude a sale," Neville Kahn, a partner at the firm, wrote in the letter.

"As a result, it will be necessary for your current Ionica

By PETER THAL LARSEN

telephone service to cease, and for you to be transferred to an alternative telephone supplier."

In return for its support, BT has been given access to Ionica's customer database and is planning to get in touch with all its customers. The company will offer them the standard charge of £9.99 for customers who want to reconnect to BT - even if they have never been BT customers.

Cable operators will also be allowed to approach Ionica's customers in the areas they



Playford: founded Ionica and floated it in July 1997

cover. However, it is unclear whether the cable companies will make the effort. One of Ionica's many problems was that it signed up a large number of risky customers who subsequently defaulted on bills.

The deal has the blessing of Ofcom, the telecoms watchdog. David Edmonds, Ofcom director-general, said: "The deal announced today will ensure an orderly transfer of customers to another phone network."

Millennium bug is already causing problems

ABOUT ONE in three of Britain's largest companies has already been hit by the millennium computer bug, according to the annual report of a government watchdog.

Many big businesses have found that their computer networks are incapable of planning beyond next year.

In one recent case the

By BARRIE CLEMENT

ing a new service which would last from 1999 to 2000 because the computer could not recognise the year 2000.

Other companies in the finance, manufacturing and utilities sectors have encountered problems in managing contracts, inventories and financial controls for the new millennium. Leaders of the Govern-

ment's Action 2000 campaign believe such difficulties will begin in earnest next 1 January, when information technology systems will be trying to plan a year ahead.

"We hope the problems will be minimal. However it could serve to persuade companies that the millennium bug is not all IT hype," said Gwyneth Flower, managing director of the campaign group.

She warned that programmers at companies may have "fiddled" with systems, introducing additional problems which could be encountered next year.

With just over a year to go, Ms Flower estimates that between 350,000 and 400,000 small and medium-sized companies - many of them key suppliers to bigger businesses - have not yet taken adequate action to

cope with the fact that computers may misinterpret the last two digits in the year 2000.

"Many companies are still looking for a miracle solution. There is no miracle solution," she said.

While nine out of ten companies employing 250 workers or more are taking adequate precautions, some of them will still be affected by failures at their suppliers.

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WT Foods plc

(Incorporated in England and Wales with registration number 94632)

Proposed acquisition of Noon Group plc

and

Placing and Open Offer

of 56,456,948 ordinary shares of 25p each

by

Hoare Govett Limited

and issue of 15,000,000 ordinary shares of 25p each as consideration, all at a price of 50p per share

Ordinary share capital immediately following the Placing and Open Offer

Authorised		Issued and fully paid	
Amount	Number	Amount	Number
£55,096,522.00	220,386,088	£38,027,432.75	152,109,731

WT Foods plc and the ordinary shares of 25p each in the Company are described in a document ("the Prospectus") dated 16 December 1998. The Prospectus has been prepared in accordance with the listing rules of the London Stock Exchange and has been delivered to the Registrar of Companies for England and Wales in accordance with Section 149 of the Financial Services Act 1986.

Copies of the Prospectus are available (on payment of a fee, for collection only) during normal business hours, up to and including 18 December 1998, from the Company Announcements Office, London Stock Exchange, Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1HP and (free of charge) during normal business hours, up to and including 30 December 1998, from the registered office of the Company at 2 Apex Point, Travellers Lane, Welham, Green, Hertfordshire AL9 7HF.

17 December 1998

Learning to live in a world of falling prices

IT HAS been a week where deflation has reached the UK. Among the main developed countries Britain has been towards the top end of the inflation range. But Monday's wholesale price index showing the price of goods falling faster than at any time for 40 years, and Tuesday's retail price index showing prices falling in key high street goods such as shoes, clothing and hi-fi, make it clear that Britain has joined the pack.



HAMISH MCRAE

It is possible to increase profits despite delivering ever-cheaper products but it is not easy

One measure of global deflation which I had not come across until a few days ago is shown in the left-hand chart, produced by the New York Bank, JP Morgan. The bank monitors 45 countries, noting what is happening to inflation, and records the number of those countries where the year-on-year rise in consumer prices is below 1 per cent.

Given the difficulties of allowing for quality improvement in products and particularly services, anything below 1 per cent is really stable prices. So we have gone from a situation eight years ago when there were one or two countries with near-zero inflation to 11 now.

Expect more next year. It is not yet appearing much in the official forecasts, but inflation in the countries participating in the euro, the so-called euro-11, may well be below 1 per cent next year. The latest annual producer-price figures for the US, the euro-11 and Japan are minus 0.7 per cent, minus 1.7 per cent and minus 2.9 per cent respectively. Expect these falls to move through into consumer prices in the months to come, particularly as the growth in demand weakens.

We have so little experience of price stability that it is very hard to adjust to it: only people with a memory of the 1930s are really able to comprehend how it might affect not only asset prices but also the conduct of businesses. There is an immediate message of lower interest rates world-wide, which many people are now taking on board. But beyond that we have hardly begun to think about this new

world. So here, in no particular order, are some of the areas where surprises might occur.

One very obvious one is in UK policy. The Bank of England is supposed to aim for an inflation target of 2.5 per cent, a target which it is now hitting. That may however appear completely out of line with the general level of world inflation. We obviously cannot have a rate of inflation which is far above that of other developed countries, and 2.5 per cent may be too high. Crunch time will come next year, if inflation in the US and the euro-11 drops sharply.

A second area of potential surprise could be the speed of decline in interest rates world-wide, and the ineffectiveness of rate cuts as a means of stimulating the economies concerned. The UK economy is very sensitive to changes in

short-term rates because much of our housing is financed by loans tied to these rates. But most economies are not. Home loans are generally at fixed rates and so are not directly affected by rate changes, while interest payments are a significant source of income for many retired people. So there may be other examples of the Japanese phenomenon, where a cut in interest rates reduces demand rather than increasing it. Germany is an obvious candidate.

The third area of surprise may be how low bond yields might go. The graph on the left, taken from *The International Bank Credit Analyst*, shows US bond yields since 1830. The interesting period is the one between 1870 and 1900, which roughly corresponds with what was, until the 1930s, the phrase, the great depression. It was a period of gently falling prices, and generally falling bond yields. But even at the end of that period, yields did not go below 3 per cent, as they did in the 1940s and early 1950s when there was some (albeit very modest) inflation.

So the question arises: what are the appropriate yields for long-dated US government stock in this deflationary world? Should the big number at the front be four, three or even two? UK long rates seem curiously low at the moment relative to US and German ones, but there is clearly scope for falls in rates elsewhere.

The fourth area of surprise may turn out to be in the very different performance of companies in different parts of the commercial forest.

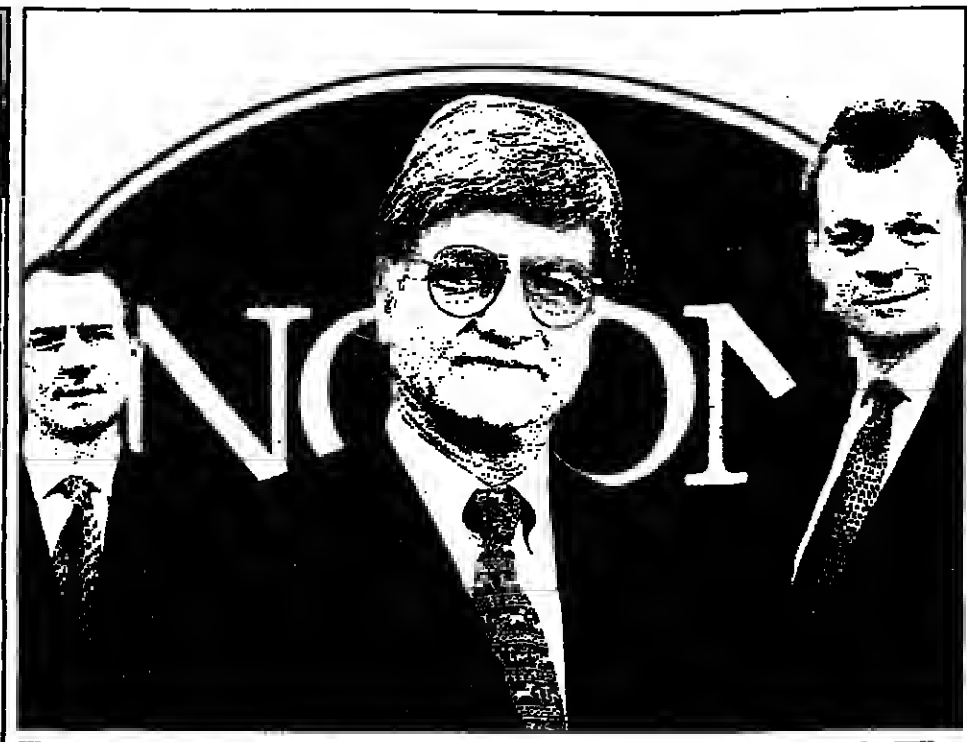
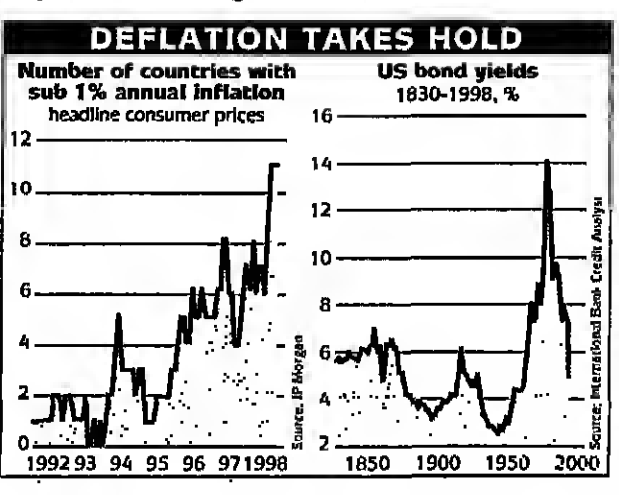
There are some chunks of the economy where price destruction has yet to take hold. As we reported yesterday there are areas like personal services, magazines and other subscriptions where prices have been going up by 6-7 per cent a year. By contrast oil and other fuel and audio-visual kit are down 16-17 per cent. If these trends continue and, in addition, deflation becomes more general, we may have a situation where only companies providing services can charge more for their output. Companies making things will all end up charging less.

It is possible to increase profits despite delivering ever-cheaper products, but it is not easy. Expect companies whose output is intangible to continue to benefit relative to those whose output is tangible - at least until price destruction hits their service companies too, as it has in mobile phones.

Area of surprise number five is the public sector. The public sector has been accustomed to being able to charge more for its output, using the general excuse of rising costs. For example we all expect the council tax to rise as part of general inflation. But if prices in general are stable, the excuse of rising costs becomes untenable.

Expect profound pressure on the public sector, not just here, but throughout the developed world, to live within existing tax revenues. Indeed, if prices fall, indirect tax revenues will fall too. That is happening to general tax revenues in Japan, and could happen to European VAT revenues. I don't think governments have begun to think about the consequences of a world where they have to live with revenues that tend to fall each year, instead of rising.

They will, if the trend of the last few weeks does indeed take a sharp further downward twist in 1999.



The 1994 Asian Businessman of the Year, Gulam Noon, flanked yesterday by WT Foods' Rod Garland (left), finance director, and chief executive Keith Stott (right)

Curry king Noon takes away £50m

AN INDIAN businessman who came to Britain in the 1970s has netted a £50m fortune after selling his chilled and frozen curries business to WT Foods, the ethnic food group.

Gulam Noon, 62, will receive £35m in cash from the deal, with the remainder payable in WT Food shares and loan notes.

Mr Noon set up Noon Group in Southall, west London, in 1987 after being disappointed with the standard of Indian foods available in supermarkets.

The business grew rapidly and it is now a major provider of ready-made Indian meals to top supermarket names such as Sainsbury's and Waitrose.

Mr Noon, who will continue to run the business, said yesterday that he had no immediate plans for the cash. "It's

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

just numbers," he said. But he went on to add: "England is my adopted country and it has been very good to me. It has offered me a lot of opportunities, and I want to put something back. I want to establish some charitable foundations here."

The businessman, born near Bombay, took over his family's confectionery business in the 1960s. He came to Britain in the 1970s and initially set up a sweets business before forming Noon Products in 1987. In the eight months to August the company generated profits of £1.7m on sales of £23.7m.

Mr Noon, who was named Asian Businessman of the Year in 1994, said that he did

not regret losing control of the company, and he had not considered a stock market flotation. "There is only so much you can do with a family business before you need to bring in additional professional management."

He disputed reports that he had criticised the City for its attitude towards Asian entrepreneurs. "Asian businessmen should not be shy of taking advantage of the City. I have a lot of faith in it," Mr Noon said.

WT Foods is financing the deal with a placing and open offer priced at 50p per share to raise £25.9m. The remainder of the finance will come from bank facilities and loan notes.

Trading in WT Foods shares was suspended at 52.5p in October pending the confirmation of the deal.

COMPANY RESULTS						
Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Baggeridge Brick (F)	39,383m (35.824m)	5,282m (4,656m)	9.10p (7.40p)	4.0p (3.5p)	8p	11.01.99
Bentley Systems (F)	9,111m (8,166m)	1,400m (1,342m)	0.56p (0.45p)	0.7p (0.7p)	08.04.99	22.03.99
Cambridge (F)	131,150m (128.9m)	11,550m (11,211m)	10.20p (11.3p)	9.5p (9.5p)	19.02.99	25.01.99
Cellulose (F)	3,649m (3,255m)	-4,320m (0.281m)	-4.82p (2.41p)	-	-	-
Phonelink (F)	9,945m (1,85m)	-1,701m (-1,742m)	-3.0p (-3.6p)	-	-	-
Richmond Foods (SP)	30,571m (22,811m)	1,230m (0.59m)	5.2p (7.0p)	0.5p (-)	04.02.99	29.12.98
Slate Energy (F)	2,857m (-)	-0.044m (-0.727m)	-0.02p (0.23p)	-	-	-
WT Foods (F)	21,570m (17,299m)	2,380m (1,54m)	1.22p (1.41p)	0.75p (0.50p)	01.01.99	0a
Zorgo Holdings (F)	7,240m (5,37m)	-3,07m (-0.078m)	-14.70p (-0.26p)	-	-	-

IN BRIEF

Income rises 19% at KPMG

KPMG, the accounting and consulting firm, shrugged off its failed merger talks with rival Ernst & Young to record a 19 per cent increase in gross fees. The jump, which follows similar strong performances from the other Big Five firms, took income to £867m. But distributable profit rose even more strongly - by 23 per cent to £179m. The average reward per partner also rose 19 per cent, to £305,000.

Biotech falls

SHARES in British Biotech dropped 15 per cent yesterday as the ailing biotechnology group cancelled a clinical trial to test marimastat on ovarian cancer patients. The shares dropped 5.25p to 30.25p despite British Biotech's insistence the decision was not connected to marimastat's safety or effectiveness in treating ovarian cancer, but based on the methodology of the study.

Chiroscience

Chiroscience, the biotechnology company, has won approval to market its Chirocaine local anaesthetic drug in Sweden, possibly triggering a wave of similar approvals across Europe. However, its launch may be delayed by the merger of Zeneca with Astra, which produces a rival drug. Zeneca had agreed to market Chirocaine but be forced to drop the drug in order to win approval for the merger.

Oil price jumps

CRUDE OIL yesterday posted its biggest gain in almost six months amid mounting tension in the Gulf. In Looadoo, benchmark January Brent crude rose by 76 cents to \$10.98 a barrel.

Fed sets limits

THE US Federal Reserve may limit bank lending to hedge funds in the wake of the near-collapse of the hedge fund Long Term Capital Management (LTCM). Patrick Parkinson, a Fed official, told US Congress: "Weakness in risk management practices need to be addressed. Private market discipline seems to have largely broken down".

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- Epson Stylus 300 colour inkjet printer (RPP £119). Choice of free colour ink or black ink.
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- 333MHz Pentium II Processor - 64MB RAM
- 4.2GB hard disk - 750MB free
- 3D graphics card - 32MB VRAM
- 15" colour monitor - 1024x768 resolution
- 512K cache - Windows 95, Office 97, Internet Explorer 4.0, Netscape 4.0, and more!
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- 512K cache - Windows 9

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M&S at four-year low in retail gloom

MARKS & SPENCER tumbled to a near four-year low as high street gloom continued to rattle the stock market.

The investment house Henderson Crosthwaite was responsible for the latest bearish analysis. It suggested that M&S's sales were running up to 10 per cent lower and slashed its year's profit forecast from £250m to £200m. Last year's profit was £1.18bn. The shares tumbled 5.75p to 390.35p with Seag putting turnover at a not inconsiderable 11.25 million shares, most off the computerised order book.

Even before the Henderson onslaught, Marks had been subjected to a wide array of bearish rumours, ranging from shortages of certain lines to warehouses stuffed with unwanted goods. The retail chain's interim figures were bitterly disappointing, and the battle to run the group unedifying. The £1.8m share sales by Keith Oates, the unsuccessful leadership candidate, last week also unsettled sentiment.

Henderson's researchers, Roy Maconochie and Matthew McEachran, say Marks' food side has

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

been sluggish and its clothing sales "very weak". They reckon the shares could be a buy at around 350p.

The Henderson men say Marks' problems have increased in the Christmas run-up. With 16 to 17 per cent of the clothing market, the retailer is set for a mammoth sales which, according to industry sources, will not occur until after Christmas.

Messrs Maconochie and McEachran believe the Marks sell-off will knock other retailers. "They are going to have to clear a lot of stock, which is going to hit everyone

else," they say. Marks is able to send some surplus lines back to its suppliers but they will respond by removing brand labels and returning the stock to cut-price retailers.

The fall-out from Marks' trading problems has prompted Henderson to lower other high street forecasts. Arcadia, which has already warned of a disappointing Christmas, is cut from £63m to £50m; Debenhams from £146m to £138m and Sears from £43m to £38m.

Footsie enjoyed a more confident session, reflecting New York's overnight strength, and closed 73.3 points higher at 5,630.4, encouraging supporting shares to edge forward.

Oils firmed as tension mounted over Iraq. At one time Lasmo was below 100p, the first time since 1986, with stories of a rights issue going the rounds. The shares ended 0.75p off at 101.5p.

Last month the oil group, which famously escaped the clutches of Enterprise Oil, said it was cutting 200 head office jobs in a bid to save £30m and keep the company viable in the current environment of low crude oil prices.

British Petroleum rose 21p to

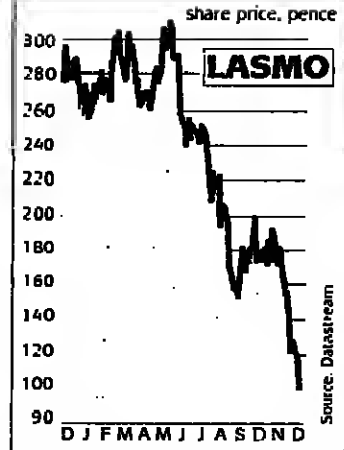
876.5p, although its merger with Amoco could face delay as the US Federal Trade Commission was reported to be seeking additional concessions before approving the giant Anglo-American merger.

TRICORDER TECHNOLOGY, developing 3D technology for digital cameras, held at 56.5p. Its bid to raise up to £3m at 56p through an open offer closes on Monday, 31, with 13.97 per cent, is taking up its entitlement. The company has been chosen as one of the European hi-tech groups to watch in a survey of venture capitalists and wealthy private investors. The shares were around 101p when they arrived on AIM in the summer.

Scottish & Southern Energy, the result of the Scottish Hydro-Electric Southern Electric merger, started life at 661p, up 8.5p, with Dresdner Kleinwort Benson positive.

Allied Domecq, meeting analysts, rose 3.75p to 561.25p, and

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Racal Electronic, with the help of analytical talk and takeover chatter, put up 5p to 335.5p. The company described speculation about a bid from General Electric Co as unfounded. "We are not aware of any stake-building in Racal by GEC and we have not been approached," said a spokesman.

Reed International, the publisher, headed the Footsie leader

board with a 34p gain to 476p. Renewed suggestions that Microsoft was stake-building in Reed's Dutch partner, Elsevier, were responsible for the interest. Reuters was also firm, up 37p at 577.5p.

SKETCHLEY, which sold its retail dry cleaning operations and now concentrates on providing textile and cleaning services to corporate clients, is back in the takeover frame. There is talk that a German group is on the prowl. The shares edged ahead 1.5p to 35p; they were down to 26p in October. Sketchley, largely due to its retail side, has had a difficult time; its shares were around 140p in 1996.

Tesco ignored the retail gloom, climbing 5.5p to 172.75p. A rash of analytical support was responsible, with HSBC and Warburg Dillon Read among those upgrading.

On the under-card, corporate action continued. Vision, develop-

ing electronic cameras, jumped 14.5p to 48p as bid talks started. The chemical group Brent International was up 9.5p to 80.5p, as a possible suitor hovered, and Zergo put on 21.5p to 365p after paying £33m for Baltimore Technologies, an information security group.

Hewlett-Packard, a building materials group, gained a further 10p to 185p as Kingspan produced a 200p-a-share (£37.1m) take over.

Delta, the electrical group, firmed 10p to 115p, reflecting its customary year-end investment meeting. But its comments caused a short-circuit at BICC, down 5.5p to 57p. Negative observations about the cable industry apparently did much of the damage. Selling by a US investor was another influence. A parcel of 2.9 million shares was eventually picked up by an institution at 51.5p. There was surprise that Wassall, a venture capital group which has been piling into BICC and now has 9.1 per cent, did not buy the unwanted shares.

SEAG VOLUME: 901.2 million
SEAG TRADES: 66,251
GILT INDEX: 115.15 +0.01

Investment: Lord Harris says sales have been on an upward trend since August

Baggeridge Brick sees orders holding steady

BY SIMON DUKE

BAGGERIDGE BRICK bucked the recent bearish trend in construction, as it said that commercial and export orders were still steady, in spite of shaky consumer confidence.

Reporting a 29 per cent increase in full year pre-tax profit to £5.3m, Peter Ward, chairman, said that buoyant commercial sales had ironed out earnings losses from housing starts, which were down 5 per cent across the country.

"Despite the general economic uncertainty, forecasters are generally predicting construction activity to be at similar levels in 1999, with increases in infrastructure and the commercial sector offsetting declines elsewhere," he added.

Baggeridge, which derives roughly 60 per cent of its turnover from the commercial properties, recently won a contract to supply bricks for a new hospital in Norwich, funded by the Private Finance Initiative.

Martin Haines, the finance director, predicts that orders from investment projects will continue to grow next year.

He also expects government new housing requirement forecasts, due in January, to be much higher than previously believed, "with the underlying need for new housing in the UK forcing itself through to the construction sector in the medium to long term."

Simon Larkin, an analyst at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, said that the results were "highly impressive", and that the company was "extremely well managed". Baggeridge's share price rose 0.5p to 79p on the back of today's announcement, and at current forecasts of £40m in pre-tax profits for 1999, it is valued at a forward p/e of 8.5.

"The current market valuation of this company is an anomaly, which will be corrected. They are already on a low rating, with potential bad news largely accounted for in the share price," Mr Larkin added.

Carpetright provides a ray of hope on the high street

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

CARPETRIGHT, the carpet retailer run by Lord Harris of Peckham, offered Britain's embattled high streets some cause for optimism yesterday when it reported improving sales trends in recent months.

Reporting a fall in half-year profits from £16.2m to £11.6m for the six months to October, Lord Harris said sales had been on an upward trend since August and that same-store sales in November, its strongest month, were up by 7.2 per cent on the same month last year. Though sales had flattened in December, he said the outlook was encouraging.

"If we can carry on the way we are, we will be very happy," he said. "People tend to lump us in with big-ticket item retailers like furniture but our average spend is £150. We're small-ticket." Lord Harris said that while people might be avoiding spending on cars and furniture, carpets appeared to be higher on shopping lists.

"We're first in a slump but we come out first too," said John Kitchen, managing director.

The upbeat statement prompted a 13.5p jump in Carpetright's shares to 210.5p. Lord Harris said Carpetright was taking market share from rivals and its share of the declining UK carpet market stood at around 13 per cent. But it has cut back on



Lord Harris: 'If we carry on the way we are, we will be very happy'

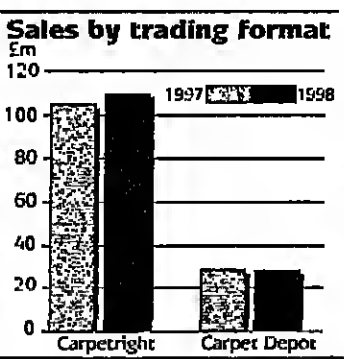
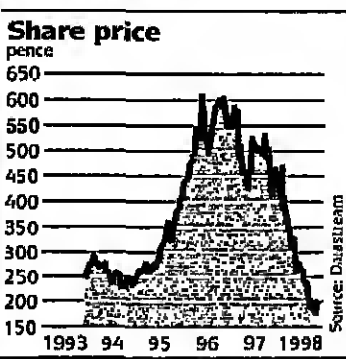
its store opening programme and will only open a net two new stores in the second half.

Eight of the larger Carpet Depot stores have been converted into Carpetright, though sales in the Depot stores are holding up better than in Carpetright. Margins have been maintained and the group has returned to its policy of promotional discounting after abandoning its failed experiment with its lowest-price guarantee. "We're a discounter and we have to accept that," Lord Harris said.

CARPETRIGHT: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £164.8m, share price 21.5p (+13.5p) (-6 months)

Five-year record	1996	1997	1998	97/98	98/99
Turnover (£m)	185.3	233.8	269.3	128.9	131.9
Pre-tax profits (£m)	25.2	32.1	29.1	16.2	11.5
Earnings per share (p)	22.3	28.5	26.0	14.3	10.4
Dividends per share (p)	14.5	14.0	22.0	9.5	9.5



Zergo becomes a leader in Net commerce

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

market is expected to explode in the next 18 months as electronic commerce takes off in both the United States and Europe.

"This makes us indisputably number one in Europe and Asia and number two in the US," said Henry Baker, Zergo chairman and chief executive. "It makes us a real contender for global leadership."

Zergo has traditionally concentrated on providing large security projects for banks and government departments. But Baltimore is one of two leading firms providing Pub-

lic Key Infrastructure technology - the systems that allow people to trade securely on the Net.

Baltimore already counts large organisations such as the Irish government, the British Post Office and Deutsche Bank among its customers. The deal with Zergo will allow it to target the US market where Entrust, its main rival, has established a lead.

At the moment the market is still tiny. Baltimore's revenues were about £1.6m last year, while Zergo yesterday reported a pre-tax loss of £2.1m on turnover of £7.7m in the six months to the end of October. How-

ever, the growth is explosive: Baltimore's sales are expected to treble this year.

"In order to conduct electronic business you need to create an element of trust," said Michael Wand, a software analyst at Paribas, the investment bank.

Zergo shares jumped 21.5p to 364p yesterday, valuing the company at £66m. Given that Zergo is not expected to turn a profit for a while, that valuation may look pricey. But analysts argue that it can maintain its lead as electronic commerce takes off, the shares will prove to be a bargain.

Breuer tells how every dog will have his D Day

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

ROLF BREUER, Deutsche Bank's chairman, ruffled a few feathers a fortnight ago when he said that staff to be kept on following the merger with Bankers Trust would be selected on the basis of "Best of Breed".

This prompted some wags among the London-based employees of the two banks to wonder whether they should sport "Best of Breed" badges in true Cruft's style.

Now Herr Breuer has dubbed the day the merger will reach completion as "D Day". Obviously he has a more finely developed sense of humour than most Germans are given credit for.

THE ACQUISITION by Citigate of fellow City spin doctors Dewe Rogerson a couple of months ago has not been all sweetness and light. I am afraid to say. First there was unhappiness among some former Citigate managers that their new Dewe colleagues were getting paid a fatter bonus following the deal.

Now the two sets of staff are holding separate Christmas parties. The Citigate people held their knees-up last week at the Bleeding Heart, a popular restaurant in Hatton Garden. Their Dewe Rogerson colleagues will party the night away in South Kensington tonight at, appropriately enough, the Natural History Museum.

WHEN YOU are 33, a bachelor, and have a reputed personal fortune of £5bn putting you at number 70 in the Forbes magazine list of the world's richest people, you can afford to have some fun.

Taking your Miss UK girlfriend on a cruise on your 200-foot motor yacht in the Caribbean might be good enough for most, but Ernesto Bertarelli, Italian-born and living in Switzerland, has for some time enjoyed roaring around Lake Geneva on his 40-foot racing trimaran, *Alinghi*.

Now he has allocated a few millions to buying a fleet of eight, nearly identical 80-foot yachts and underwriting a World Championship circuit which takes them around northern Europe next summer and back to the Mediterranean in the autumn.

Mr Bertarelli has used his own

money to pay for the enterprise and intends to race himself. He made his pile from his company Ares-Serono, a pioneer of fertility drugs and treatments for multiple sclerosis, among other things.

It sounds a daring enterprise for one so commercially valuable to his 4,000 employees, but bravery seems to be his hallmark. His spokesman, a Swiss Frenchman called Nicolas de Saussure, turned up yesterday in Marseilles - the home of the French national anthem and part of the region which assisted with the building of the yacht at nearby La Ciotat - and announced at the launch of his master's yachting enterprise: "The presentation will take place in English, so that everyone understands well."

BACK IN the good old days, the lifestyle of a geologist for an oil company very much resembled that of Indiana Jones, scouting for the black gold around the more far-flung and exotic parts of the globe. Now the job is mostly done "from offices and oil rigs", according to Richard Haythornthwaite, who started his career as a geologist with BP in 1978.

Since then Mr Haythornthwaite, who celebrates his 42nd birthday today, has risen to hold several key management posts at BP, Premier Oil and latterly Blue Circle Industries (BCI). Yesterday he was named group chief executive of BCI, to succeed Keith Orrell-Jones when the latter leaves next July.

Mr Haythornthwaite's other great love is modern art. He has advised Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate Gallery, on marketing strategies and is currently a trustee of the Whitechapel Art Gallery.

'People and Business' welcomes your contributions. Please send your e-mails to indybusiness@independent.co.uk.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Country	Sterling	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	1 month	3 months
Australia	1.0000	2.6974	2.6917	0.5966	0.5971	0.5981
Canada	0.6974	0.6974	0.6974	0.6974	0.6974	0.6974
Denmark	0.1363	0.1363	0.1363	0.1363	0.1363	0.1363
ECU	1.4218	1.4218	1.4218	1.4218	1.4218	1.4218
France	6.4955	6.4955	6.4955	6.4955	6.4955	6.4955
Germany	9.3722	9.3722	9.3722	9.3722	9.3722	9.3722
Greece	2.7048	2.7048	2.7048	2.7048	2.7048	2.7048
Hong Kong	4.6871	4.6871	4.6871	4.6871	4.6871	4.6871
Ireland	12.9888	12.9888	12.9888	12.9888	12.9888	12.9888
Italy	1.1224	1.1224	1.1224	1.1224	1.1224	1.1224
Japan	276.76	276.76	276.76	276.76	276.76	276.76
Malaysia	193.76	193.76	193.76	193.76	193.76	193.76
Netherlands	2.7065	2.7065	2.7065	2.7065	2.7065	2.7065
New Zealand	1.6566	1.6566	1.6566	1.6566	1.6566	1.6566
Norway	3.1496	3.1496	3.1496	3.1496	3.1496	3.1496
Portugal	206.48	206.48	206.48	206.48	206.48	206.48
South Africa	6.2919	6.2919	6.2919	6.2919	6.2919	6.2919
Spain	163.33	163.33	163.33	163.33	163.33	163.33
Sweden	13.7601	13.7601	13.7601	13.7601	13.7601	13.7601
Switzerland	2.2542	2.2542	2.2542	2.2542	2.2542	2.2542
US	1.6763	1.6763	1.6763	1.6763	1.6763	1.6763

INTEREST RATES

Country	3 month	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr	chg
Australia	4.61	0.00	4.49	0.02	4.49	0.03	4.55
Belgium	3.27	0.00	3.16	0.00	3.13	-0.05	3.46
Canada	4.68	0.00	4.76	-0.01	4.62	-0.03	4.67
ECU	3.40	0.00	3.22	-0.01	3.28	0.00	3.50
France	0.00	0.00	3.04	0.00	3.14	-0.03	3.43
Germany	3.32	-0.02	3.19	-0.01	3.17	0.00	3.37
Italy	2.75	-0.10	3.13	0.00	3.26	0.02	3.37
Japan	0.24	-0.02	0.34	0.01	0.51	0.02	0.59
Netherlands	3.31	-0.01	3.22	-0.01	3.19	-0.03	3.45
Spain	2.80	0.03	2.90	0.00	3.10	-0.04	3.37
Sweden	3.65	0.02	3.49	0.00	3.53	0.01	3.74
Switzerland	1.48	-0.01	1.50	0.00	1.48	-0.01	1.78
UK	5.79	0.00	5.66	-0.02	5.49	0.02	4.53
US	4.34	...	4.25	...	4.43	...	4.61

MONEY MARKET RATES

Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
Base	6.06	5.96	5.89	5.79	5.69
LIBOR	6.06	5.96	5.89	5.79	5.69
Domestic Depos	5.75	6.25	6.31	6.43	6.50
European Depos	6.31	6.44	6.19	6.29	6.47
Eight Bank Bills	6.31	6.44	6.19	6.29	6.47
Sterling CDs	6.44	6.36	6.25	6.17	6.07
Eurodollar CDs	5.50	5.51	5.50	5.50	5.50
FCU Deposits	3.25	3.59	2.94	3.38	2.72

LIFFE FINANCIAL FUTURES

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est floor	Open interest
Long Gilt	Dec-98	118.45	118.42	118.35	139.00
5 Yr Gilt	Dec-98	109.75	...	...	319.00
German Bund	Mar-99	113.63	...	...	0.00
Italian Bond	Mar-99	113.63	113.56	97.57	39497.00
Japan Govt Bd	Mar-99	133.50	133.50	201.80	0.00
3 Mth Sterling	Dec-98	93.63	93.64	93.62	15832.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Jan-99	96.81	96.85	96.78	16007.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Feb-99	96.81	96.81	96.80	300.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Mar-99	96.80	96.80	96.86	4464.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Apr-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	May-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Jun-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Jul-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Aug-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Sep-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Oct-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Nov-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-99	96.80	96.80	96.87	800.00

LIFFE FTSE 100 INDEX OPTION

Series	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5550	96	26	19	30	249	154	374	247	431	315	...	...	...
5600	62	25	34	29	221	176	344	267	400	334	...	...	...
5650	36	25	58	41	193	198	315	288	370	352	...	...	...
5700	18	26	92	30	165	220	286	309	339	371	...	...	...

INDUSTRIAL METALS

LMSE (\$/tonne)	Cash	Chg	3 month	Chg	LMSEcode	Chg
Aluminum HG	1239.5	1230	1060	1247.5	1246	6 600425
Aluminum Alloy	1040	1045	500	1070	1075	3 91580
Aluminum Alloy	1040	1045	500	1070	1075	3 91580
Aluminum Alloy	1040	1045	500	1070	1075	3 91580
Lead	302	303	500	382	483	4 5 108950
Nickel	5820	5830	4500	4890	3895	40 63810
Silver	5250	5260	1500	5250	5250	20 7235
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England unable to find answers

IF IT was intended as a diversion from the misery so far experienced in Australia, the naming of England's 16-man one-day squad for the Carlton United Breweries series, despite two new names and the removal of some old ones, did nothing to lift the stygian gloom. One-day cricket may be an important aspect of the game, but success at it is like enjoying a fizzy can of pop as compared to vintage Krug - the bubbles may be there but the complexity and depth are not.

ENGLAND ONE-DAY SQUAD

England's party of 16 for next month's one-day series against Australia and Sri Lanka

A J Stewart (capt and wkt, Surrey)
M W Alleyne (Gloucestershire)
J P Crawley (Lancashire)
R D B Croft (Gloucestershire)
M A Ealham (Kent)
N H Fairbrother (Lancashire)
A F Giles (Warwickshire)
D Gough (Yorkshire)
D W Headley (Kent)
G A Hick (Worcestershire)
A H Hoddle (Surrey)
C J Hogg (Surrey)
N Hussain (Essex)
N V Knight (Warwickshire)
A D Mailey (Leicestershire)
V J Wells (Leicestershire)

flew to Canberra, a journey that required two flights and, when timed from door to door, took nearly seven hours. Collective malaise can easily take over in such conditions and preventing that can be a full-time job for those involved with the team, such as the team manager, Graham Gooch.

Lambert propels tourists to first win

BY LAWRENCE PESCOTT

THE WEST INDIES recorded the first victory of their South African tour when they beat a Natal XI by eight wickets in a one-day game yesterday. After dismissing the home side for a modest 120, the tourists scored 123 for 2 in just 25.3 overs.

The openers Clayton Lambert and Junior Murray did the bulk of the damage with an opening stand of 100 before Lambert was bowled by Deshan Reddy for 58, which came off 63 deliveries and included five fours and four sixes. Murray finished with 46 not out, and Shivnarine Chanderpaul hit Reddy for six over long-off to win the match. Reddy, a medium-pace bowler who was hit for 18 in his first over, finished with 3 for 34 off 3.3 overs.

Franklyn Rose put the West Indies on track for victory when he took 3 for 21 in an unbroken spell of 10 overs after overnight rain had delayed the start of play for 50 minutes. Rose's ball partner, Nixon McLean, gave him solid support, taking 3 for 25.

The tourists failed to win any of their first seven games and lost both Test matches, in neither of which Rose was selected. He dismissed opener Keith Forde, Jonty Rhodes and Mehmood Badat in a performance that will have impressed before the third Test, which starts in Durban on 26 December.

In Faisalabad, Pakistan are likely to include three spinners for the third and final Test against Zimbabwe which begins today.

Zimbabwe, who won the first Test in Peshawar, need a draw to win their first series abroad and Pakistan have prepared a spinners' pitch to try to avoid a repeat of their 1-0 series defeat by Australia in October. A bare, grassless strip at Faisalabad's Iqbal Stadium offers a contrasting sight to the lush outfield.

CRICKET

BY DEREK PRINGLE
in Adelaide

losing end a good few times. Defeat is a part of the game, but it's not one to accept easily.

"What the players have got to do with four games left is to regroup and show the people of Australia they can play. It won't be easy, the next two games will be tough, but we have to play good cricket in order to get us in the right frame of mind for the Melbourne Test.

"The Ashes might have gone, but we've still got the series to play for. The players don't want to leave these shores without proving they can play cricket."

Gooch, who intends to speak to the whole team when he gets a moment (they were guests of the Prime Minister yesterday and have a High Commission function tonight), knows what it is like to lose in Australia.

"If you lose, the Aussies give you funny looks all the time," said Gooch, who could have mentioned the gloating in the media, but did not. "They really like winners over here whether it is their own side or the opposition."

One of the conundrums that most niggles people, though, is why England, who can compete and even beat sides who give Australia a run for their money, save their worst cricket for the old enemy? Considering that three-quarters of the Australian bowling attack England kept capitulating to was fairly inexperienced, no one appears to have a definitive explanation.

"It's true, we don't seem to play well against them," said Gooch. "Our main problem, is



Graham Gooch (left), the England team manager, and Bob Cottam, the bowling coach, arrive at Canberra yesterday

we haven't put competitive totals on the board. Perhaps they don't allow you to play. Certainly, we've been unable to exert any pressure on them in any of the three Tests."

Solutions are not easy and, despite the better coaching and management structure now in place around the team, Gooch feels that an English cricket side will not beat the best teams on a regular basis, until changes are made at county level.

"We basically need a tough, competitive domestic system that breeds and hones talent long before it reaches the Test arena. Young players need to be given a harder start in life."

He is not convinced about

two divisions, but is willing to wait and see. He is, however, in favour of change, but only because the current system has played in, and enjoyed, is not producing the cricketers we want. "Only the best players should play county cricket."

While he skirted around the question of whether the gap between Test and county cricket is greater now, there is no denying that the era which allowed two overseas players per team, the majority of them highly motivated, was far more competitive than it is now, despite the incorporation of that other panacea turned placebo: four-day cricket.

Of course, one-day cricket is another matter and of those left

out of the 22-man squad picked for the Brisbane Test, the names of Michael Atherton and Angus Fraser will probably cause the biggest raised eyebrow.

Apparently, the selectors feel both players need rest, though what has tired Fraser out recently is anyone's guess. Mind you, the hectic itinerary and huge amount of flying were probably a consideration when it came to Atherton, despite the improvement to his back.

Graham Gooch, this time wearing his selector's hat, was at pains to explain that Fraser and Atherton had not been ruled out for the World Cup in England next May, when con-

ditions are likely to suit them better. "They'll definitely be in our thoughts," said Gooch.

This squad is probably the last chance to try out a few "unknowns" before 28 February, the closing date for naming World Cup squads. By then 19 players (including four reserves), have to be named, a number that gets reduced to 15 at the end of March.

As first-timers, Vince Wells and Mark Alleyne owe their chance to the fact that both are top-order batsmen who can bowl. Their inexperience will be countered by players like Neil Fairbrother, whose expertise at scoring quickly during the middle overs, was something England lacked last summer when

they were beaten by South Africa and Sri Lanka.

Nasser Hussain, not included in the preliminary squad a month ago, returns at the expense of Graham Thorpe, who is seeing a specialist about his back. John Crawley, hopelessly out of form in the Tests, stays as Stewart's reserve wicketkeeper.

Like Fairbrother, Thorpe is brilliant at farming the middle overs, when the run-rate needs to be upped. Unfortunately, unless he plays towards the flag end of the England A tour to Zimbabwe and South Africa, he will have no cricket in which to prove his fitness before the squads have to be named.

Ponting eager to appear at inquiry

THE AUSTRALIAN Test batsman Ricky Ponting said yesterday that he wants to be the first player to appear at an Australian Cricket Board inquiry into the bookmaker scandal to ensure no slur can be cast over his much-publicised gambling habit.

The ACB chief executive, Malcolm Speed, earlier revealed that Ponting had told him last week about an approach from an Australian bookmaker to supply information about the national team in return for money. Ponting rejected the offer and wants to put his case as soon as possible to the inquiry into player conduct which was set up in response to the betting controversy involving his team-mates Shane Warne and Mark Waugh.

"What Ricky said to me, which I accept unreservedly is that approximately a year ago in Sydney he was approached at a dog-race meeting," Speed said. "He was approached by a bookmaker, asked to provide information about the make-up of the Australian team and, in essence, who was going to be 12th man and the condition of the pitch. In return for that, he would be paid money. Ricky assures me he rejected the approach out of hand."

Speed declined to say how much money Ponting said he had been offered, while Ponting apparently did not name the bookmaker.

It is understood Ponting approached the team management last week, after the players were told that the Waugh and Warne story was to go public. It was decided to keep the matter quiet until after the third Test.

Ponting, whose Test berth is under threat because of poor form, released a book a few weeks ago titled *Punter* and is renowned for his betting.

The ACB fined Waugh and Warne in 1995 after it was learned they had received money from an Indian bookmaker for pitch and weather information during the 1994 tour of Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, Speed is hopeful Waugh and Warne will not have to go to Pakistan in response to a summons from that country's judicial commission into match-fixing and bribery.

The life and times of a master craftsman

IT COULD not have happened to a nicer man. And what a way to wrap up a distinguished career - a century in your final County Championship match to help your team lift the title.

Hugh Morris was a popular cricketer, affable, intelligent and with a refined sense of fun. Three England caps in 1991 - two of them against the mighty West Indies - do not do justice to an impressive career in which he amassed almost 20,000 first-class runs including 53 hundreds.

His final season for Glamorgan, in 1997, began with a career-best 233 not out against Warwickshire and finished with 165; and the chronicle, not just of that season, but also of his cricketing life, is beautifully related in *To Lord's With A Title - The Inside Story of Glamorgan's Championship*, by Hugh Morris, with Andy Smith (Mainstream, £14.99).

It is a book that slipped in to book stores earlier this year without much of a fanfare, which is a shame. To begin with it has not been set out in the ordinary way. Although Morris and Smith have taken the season match by match, they slide references to Morris's and the county's past into each chapter whenever the occasion warrants it. There are few wasted words, and the figures in the statistical section at the end are superb - the work of the meticulous county statistician Dr Andrew Hignell.

Morris could probably have played on into the 1998 season, but that would have been to fill his last days with bathos since they managed 13th place. No, he got it right. It was time for a change in direction. He walked out of the game to the relief of his creaking knees and into a job at Lord's as successor to Mickey Stewart. He got another title - the England and Wales Cricket Board's technical director. Wrote the book, will now make videos and no doubt the T-shirt will follow. This is a great read.

BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

Today: Cricket

So, too, although admittedly in far shorter gobbets, is *A Century of Great Cricket Quotes*, compiled by David Hopps (Robson Books, £16.95). There are some old chestnuts - Fred Trueman in 1963 on facing Hampshire slow left-arm Peter Sainsbury: "I'm all right when his arm is coming over, but I'm out of form by the time the bloody ball gets here."

But there are also some present day one-liners which supply the pith in epithet including this thought provoking one from Vic Marks on England all-rounder Chris Lewis: "The enigma with no variation." Or how about Peter Roebuck's: "Batting is a major trial before an 11-man jury."

There are plenty of put-down lines as well. The late David Bairstow, the Yorkshire and England wicketkeeper, had a cute one which he would direct more often than not at journalists: "You know three-quarters of seven-eighths of sod-all."

The great Barry Richards summed up his time at Hampshire with the cutting: "I would have preferred fewer runs and more friends." The *Independent's* former cricket correspondent, Martin Johnson, is featured heavily in the book.

His description of the moustachioed macho man of Australian cricket, Merv Hughes, showed a scant regard for the author's personal safety when he wrote: "The mincing run-up resembles someone in high heels and a panty girdle running after a bus." There are some crackers among the 2,000-odd that Hopps has culled from all eras of the 20th century. This should give hours of pleasure.

It is doubtful that Angus Fraser's *Tour Diaries* (Headline, £16.99) will grab the reader quite so readily, but it does attempt to be different. The lugubrious Fraser has kept a journal of his tours since his first to the Caribbean.

This is a distillation of five trips abroad and covers 10 Tests. But it is surely a matter of time before the world chokes on a surfeit of journals, even if they are a distillation. The problem is always that the author may well have been tempted to tinker with the entries with the wonderful benefits provided by hindsight.

The best of the genre has to have come from Fraser's Middlesex colleague Phil Tufnell, *Postcards from the Beach* (Collins Willow, £6.99). For a start it is a lot cheaper being paperback; for another it is crammed with dry humour and wry observations. It takes the reader into the dark world of the cricket dressing-room on England's West Indies tour last winter. This is the way to produce a diary.

One of the more entertaining autobiographies to hit the bookshelves is Devon Malcolm's punchy *You Guys are History* (Collins Willow, £16.99). It is a trip through one of English cricket's favourite characters, and Devon does not hold back. Fortnight does not come into it. This gives it to you straight, however wayward the fast bowler has been in his time.

Other books: *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack* (John Wisden, £27.50); *NatWest Playfair Cricket Annual* (Headline, £4.99); *Cricketing Falstaff: A Biography of Colin Milburn*, by Mark Peel (Andre Deutsch, £17.99); *Number One - The World's best batsmen and bowlers*, by Simon Wilde (Victor Gollancz, £16.99); *We're Right Behind You, Captain - The Alternative Story of an Ashes Year*, by David Hopps (Robson Books, £17.95).

DAVID LLEWELLYN

PRODUCT RECALL NOTICE

McVITIE'S ALL BUTTER SHORTBREAD 200g PACKS CONTAINING 14 FINGERS

McVitie's regret to announce that a technical problem has been identified with the production of 200g (14 finger) packs of McVitie's All Butter Shortbread with a best before date of 19 JUN 99, followed by the letters TB.

As a precaution, McVitie's is advising customers not to eat biscuits from 200g packs of McVitie's All Butter Shortbread with a best before date of 19 JUN 99 followed by the letters TB, and to return any packs purchased as detailed below:

THE ACTION TO TAKE

If you have a 200g packet of McVitie's All Butter Shortbread:

1. Check the best before date;
2. If it is "19 JUN 99 TB," please return the pack to the address below.

We will fully refund you for the product, postage and packing.

We apologise for this inconvenience but we are taking this action in the interests of customer safety.

NO TINS OF McVITIE'S SHORTBREAD OR ANY OTHER McVITIE'S PRODUCT OR PACK FORMAT IS AFFECTED

For further information, please contact the McVitie's Customer Careline on 0800 14 12 14.

Please return goods to: McVitie's Consumer Relations, FREEPOST, PO Box 117, Staines, Middlesex TW18 3PH.

FA crisis: Successors at game's governing body should refrain from deal-cutting and accept loss of 2006 World Cup

Our incompetent influence-peddlers

IT'S HARD to know which is the more scandalous aspect of the Wiseman/Kelly affair: the fact that senior English football administrators apparently found it necessary to mimic the kind of influence-peddling tactics traditionally associated with spics, dagoes and wops, or the evidence that they turned out to be so humiliatedly bad at it.

At least Keith Wiseman, who continues to deny that he was attempting to buy votes with the offer of "grants", may have stumbled across one important truth: Northern Ireland is not a Third World country. The Welsh may have responded with gratifying wonderment to the promise of a few heads and mirrors, but the trick doesn't work with everyone.

And the most important lesson is clear. The successors to



RICHARD WILLIAMS

these men should have no truck with the kind of deal-cutting that leads to the acquisition of prestige tournaments. And if this means no World Cup for the foreseeable future, then we can hardly complain.

The idea of England hosting the 2006 World Cup certainly

had its appealing side. But it never seemed very realistic in the wake of Euro 96, despite the euphoria created by vested interests. The Lightning Seeds sang one song, but reality danced to a different drummer.

Does no one remember the huge blocks of vacant seats at many of the group matches, a phenomenon which contradicted the new image of the English football fan as a cappuccino-drinking connoisseur of the world game? At best, this suggested some kind of administrative incompetence. At worst it created the impression of incapacity combined with a lack of regard both for the players and for those spectators who would have filled the empty spaces with joy.

More seriously, did no one in a position of authority notice the

riot in Trafalgar Square after England had lost to Germany in a wonderful semi-final, and ponder its meaning? Even if we accept that hooliganism is society's problem rather than football's, the awakening of the spectre of English game's murky past should have been enough to curb the football establishment's tendency to immoderate self-congratulation and to make men of sound judgement feel that an immediate World Cup bid might be just a bit premature.

All of which does not even take account of the FA's promise to back Germany's candidacy in return for their support in the Euro 96 campaign. Whatever the facts behind the breaking of that promise, only our essential insularity prevents us from ap-

preciating the disapproval that it engendered elsewhere. English fair play died not with the dirt in Michael Atherton's pocket at Lord's or with Nigel Heslop's unprovoked assault on Serge Blanco at the Parc des Princes, but with the cold-blooded reneging on that pledge to the old enemy, an act conducted during an unmitigated exchange in some murky committee room.

During yesterday's outpouring of phone-in outrage, the most appropriate comment in fact came from an Englishman, but a disinterested one. Keith Cooper, FFA's director of communications, suggested that among the bids for 2006 there might still be one from Brazil. If England was the cradle of football, then Brazil has more right than any to be con-

sidered the heart of the modern game, yet not since 1950 has it hosted the tournament which has won four times.

What better use could there be for the cash sloshing around FFA's vaults than the restoration of the infrastructure of Brazilian football, with the aim of creating the conditions necessary for the holding of a World Cup? The Maracana has already been refurbished, but elsewhere there are vast crumbling concrete bowls which, properly rebuilt, would make marvellous arenas for the tournament – and they would still not be half big enough to contain all the Brazilians wanting to demonstrate their fervour.

As a football fan with a proper sense of history and romance, Graham Kelly would probably go along with that. For a man who

rose as if through a vacuum, sucked inexorably upwards by the absence of competence at senior levels, he did a pretty good job for English football. He coped, however awkwardly, with the impossible job of officially acknowledging the tragedies of the late Eighties, and he nursed the modernisation of the fabric of the game in the years after the Taylor Report. He helped clear the way for the inauguration of the Premier League, an inevitability which took place remarkably swiftly and efficiently (compare and contrast the wrangling over cricket's attempt to update its first-class structure). Until this week, the worst blot on Kelly's record was created by the FA's inability to confront the various bung scandals with any real clarity of purpose or moral rigour.

It was in this failure that the organisation's internal conditions began to emerge, staining many of its initiatives, such as the unnecessary sponsorship of the FA Cup, or the invention of something called "Green Flag Team England". Like Kelly's haircuts, the FA's philosophical stance represented an unconvincing attempt to keep up.

But football will spend the next 10 years dealing with men such as Rupert Murdoch and Mark McCormack, whose only interest in the game's health is financial and whose command of tactics and strategy is beyond that of any politician. For football, those 10 years promise to be a period of unparalleled prosperity. After Wiseman and Kelly, the FA had better get itself some real professionals.

'Worst job in football' attracts no interest

Reform is needed if the FA is to overcome disinterest and appoint the right people. By Glenn Moore

THE FIRST day of campaigning opened yesterday in traditional fashion, with various candidates for the posts of Football Association chairman and chief executive queuing up to express a total lack of interest in the two positions.

Rick Parry, the former chief executive of the Premier League and a contender for Graham Kelly's vacant position, was the first off the mark as he declared his heart belonged at Anfield, where he is chief executive. Greg Dyke, a favoured outsider, followed quickly, accompanying his statement of disinterest with the remark: "I can't think of a worse job, the way the FA is currently structured and organised. I agree with David Mellor when he said: if ever there was an organisation where lots of men in blue blazers needed to fall on their swords, it's the FA."

Parry, though using moderate language, said much the same, and this is at the nub of any consideration of what happens next. The FA, though it has become far more proactive in recent years, remains hamstrung by an archaic bureaucracy in which the Royal Air Force, New Zealand and Cambridge University each have a voice but Manchester United do not. This is because the FA Council, which includes representatives of all the former among its 93 members but not United, is the ultimate decision-making body.

The FA's reformers, and there are more than might be imagined, want to replace rule by oligarchy with that of an executive board. The new chief executive would thus not be an all-powerful US-style commissioner but the head of a streamlined board which would have the power and ability to react quickly to events. But there is one fundamental problem. First the FA turkeys have to vote for Christmas. That 70

per cent are needed to do so to push through reform does not make it any easier.

Should this be achieved, and there may never be a better opportunity, there could be more than two posts on offer. The chairman's job, which at present is not salaried, is a curious mix of pomp and politics. There is a lot of glad-handing of dignitaries but also the exercise of power within UEFA and FIFA. It would make sense to divide the post, with someone like Sir Bobby Charlton taking on the more ambassadorial aspects, as he is with the World Cup bid, and a political animal dealing with the internal politics of the FA and the external ones at UEFA and FIFA.

The day-to-day administration of the game is at present dealt with by committee. There are so many of these it is difficult to keep count, and most are far too big. Trying to keep abreast of them all and both implement and shape policy is the chief executive. A common complaint within the FA is the amount of time and ego-massaging required to pass the most trifling matters.

A better solution would be a cabinet operating on the same lines as that of the government. With a re-structuring of staff and a co-opting of representatives of the PFA, the Football League and other relevant bodies as appropriate, decisions could be made with greater speed and co-ordination.

This would require a prime ministerial figure considering the broad vision – possibly the same political animal mentioned above – and a Prescott figure behind him dealing with the nuts and bolts. Others could take charge of individual departments dealing with, for example, television, foreign players and players' contracts, and the England set-up. There are already committees dealing with such issues but they are



David Davies, the Football Association's Director of Public Affairs, is keeping quiet about his ultimate ambitions

Kelly not likely to be short of work

BY GLENN MOORE

GRAHAM KELLY'S most likely response to his sudden unemployment will be to use the free time to fit in a few games of football – but he is not likely to be out of work for long.

It is hard to imagine him forging a career for himself in the media – though if Neil Hamilton can become a mini-celebrity, there may be some scope – but his telephone is sure to ring with attractive offers from within the game.

Kelly has spent a lifetime in football administration, during which he built up an enviable range of contacts around the world. The only question is whether he now uses those as a poacher or gamekeeper.

Several sports bodies could make use of his contacts and expertise.

Football-based ones like the Football Trust are a possibility, as are more general organisations such as the Sports Council. He could also move into Europe. Kelly is widely respected within UEFA and, by doing the honourable thing in immediately resigning, may not be tarnished by the present scandal for long.

A more lucrative alternative would be an appointment with one of the clubs, similar to Rick Parry's chief executive role at Liverpool. While he may be unlikely to take such a position, he should be in demand as a consultant.

Sports marketing companies such as ISL, who hired Glen Kilton after he had organised Euro 96, may also be interested in Kelly's contacts and number-crunching abilities.

The most romantic thought is that Kelly could put together a consortium to revive Blackpool, the team he followed and once represented – albeit at Third XI level.

The club has now fallen on hard times. Their historic ground is in a dilapidated state while their administration is still recovering from the prison sentence imposed on the owner and former chairman Owen Oyston, who remains a director at the club.

Jimmy Armfield, a friend and FA consultant, could be enlisted in this "tangerine dream" which would see Kelly's Heroes returning to a top flight they left 20 years ago.

Maybe presenting Sir-O-Six is more likely.

unwieldy and not part of such an integrated structure.

Which leads us to personnel. There are plenty of candidates for the figurehead, who should have the chance to make input as well. Sir Bobby and Gary Lineker are contenders but they are already involved in the 2006 bid. Bobby Robson, should he give up day-to-day coaching after his contract at Everton expires in May, would be ideal.

The preferred choice for political chairman would be David Shephshanks or David Dein. Both are effective in smoke-filled rooms as well as on television. They are also independently wealthy, which may be a bonus. Either could combine this post with that of football's "prime minister", leaving David Davies, who has been coy on his ambitions, to take the John Prescott role. The check in this system would be a reformed FA Council, more representative of the modern game, which would have the power, in exceptional circumstances, to unseat the executive.

CANDIDATES FOR THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION'S TOP JOBS

CHAIRMAN

David Shephshanks
Liverpool chairman, outgoing chairman of Football League. Impressed many with his stewardship of the Football League, where he recently stepped down as chairman. Only a council member since 1997 but involved in many FA committees. Member of the committee which investigated Wiseman's Welsh deal.

David Dein
Arsenal vice-chairman. Brought Arsenal Wenger to Arsenal and already an influential voice in UEFA circles. Has done well out of football's new popularity but regarded, at Highbury, as a fan first and speculator second. From the modernising wing, joined council in 1995. Also on investigative committee.

Geoff Thompson
Sheffield & Hallamshire FA. Stepped up from vice-chairman to acting chairman in the wake of Tuesday's crisis. FA Council member since 1979 and most prominent representative of the council's bedrock, the county FAs. Plain-speaking and a JP. Third member of investigating group.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

David Richards
Sheffield Wednesday chairman. The preferred choice of the Premier League two years ago, he came third behind Wiseman. Has remained low-profile since, though the regular turnover of managers at Hillsborough indicates a hard edge. Council member since 1994.

Noel White
Liverpool director. The man who brought down Terry Venables as England manager and a powerful voice on the international committee. Originally involved with Aston Villa but now a key figure at Anfield. Council member since 1976 and an FA vice-president. Qualified auditor and chartered accountant.

Mea Bates
Chelsea chairman. Controversial chairman of Chelsea, now reaping rewards of years of work at Stamford Bridge. An outside choice though reported, in some quarters, to have been offered job of caretaker chairman for two years. Age 67, council member since 1992, would attempt radical change.

David Davies
As temporary chief, he has the chance to stake a powerful claim for the permanent position. Good on television, ambitious and energetic, he seeks to turn the crisis into a catalyst for change. Has enemies and was weakened by collaboration on Hoddle's diary. Would like to move on from press officer role but may settle for a new trouble-shooting post.

Rick Parry
Anfield's chief executive has declared himself out of the running, but you never know. Impressed many with his smooth handling of egos as the Premier League's first chief executive and knows the FA's weaknesses. May be hard to prise from Liverpool, where his heart and home are.

Richard Scudamore
Head-hunted to lead the Football League and already showing dynamism required at Lancaster Gate. Former referee who was working in business in USA when the League called. Would become a strong candidate if Shephshanks is elected chairman.

Gordon Taylor
Former Blackburn winger who has turned the players' union into one of the game's most proactive and successful bodies. A good negotiator with the game at heart, but he may feel he is more influential where he is rather than being hamstrung by FA bureaucracy. The FA may also blush at his £350,000 salary.

Peter Leaver
Currently chief executive of the Premier League but under criticism for autocratic manner. Lawyer and long-time Tottenham fan with a sharp mind.

Greg Dyke
Knowledge of television, football and business, he is well qualified. Currently on board of Manchester United plc and believed to be one of the doubters on the Sky bid.

Sir Roland Smith
An alternative outsider, he is a former Bank of England director, university professor and business consultant, who is also on United's plc board.

Setback to the strong case for a benevolent dictatorship

APPROACHING THE 21st century, English football cannot quite decide whether to be run as a genuine democracy or a benevolent dictatorship. Does it want key decisions made – slowly and laboriously, perhaps – by a broad parliament representing all levels of the sport, or a single dynamic executive in the style of the NFL's Commissioner? At present, for better or for worse, the governing body is run under the former system. Veering too far away from it is what has landed the Football Association's Keith Wiseman and Graham Kelly in uncomfortably hot water.

A century ago, the single committee running the FA since its earliest days was

transmuted into a 50-strong FA Council. The Council now comprises 91 members, with representatives ranging from Keith Bates and David Dein of the Premier League to Lt Cdr PJW Danks of the Royal Navy. Canada and the West Indies have lost their membership, but Australia and New Zealand remain, as do Oxford and Cambridge University, and the Independent Schools. Crucial to the structure is that every one of the 43 county football associations are represented.

As well as 73 members drawn from these different bodies, there are an assortment of vice-presidents and life vice-presidents, the latter group tending to comprise some of the

If the Football Association is to progress it may have to replace its broad parliament with a more dynamic style of leadership. By Steve Tongue

sport's more senior citizens: one of their number has been a Council member since 1894. In the handsome Council Chamber at Lancaster Gate – currently out of use because of the fire there earlier this year – the newest members sit in the back row, slowly working their way forward as the years wear on or the others die off.

Every member sits on at least two committees, of which there are 20 in total, covering all aspects of the game: disciplinary, commercial, refereeing, international, the FA Cup etc. And the greatest of these is the

11-strong executive committee, which on Monday formally expressed its lack of confidence in Wiseman, the FA chairman.

These then are the "gentlemen in blue blazers", some of whom David Mellor of the Government's Task Force suggested might be ripe for a cull. (How many are actually gentlemen is not known: the one who certainly is not is Miss Julie Hemley, representing the Women's Football Alliance).

Mellor wants "a proper administration for football... appropriate to a modern,

high-profile financially driven game". The FA now has a turnover of £80m and a full-time staff of 160; the chairmen, unlike the chief executive, does not receive a salary, despite Wiseman's attempt to award himself £75,000 a year, which was turned down by the Council.

Other important officers include the company secretary Nic Coward, who is a legal expert, a commercial director, director of finance and the director of public affairs, David Davies, all of whom will take on added responsibilities to fill the void left by Kelly's departure.

Then there is the revamped technical department under Howard Wilkinson, now including a whole raft of regional development officers.

Modernisation in those departments has occurred as a result of recommendations in the FA's 1991 "Blueprint for the Future of Football". Attempts at reforming the Council have been less successful, for the same reason that turkeys do not vote in favour of Christmas. As long ago as 1968, the original Government-sponsored Chester Report suggested a compulsory retirement age of

70 and felt it was "extraordinary" that members reaching 75 should be promoted to become life vice-presidents. "The FA should encourage younger men to participate in the administration of the game," the report said, adding: "A Council of 84 members, though excellent for broad discussion and for representing the interests of the game in every part of the country, cannot be an effective policy-making body."

Like many of the report's recommendations, the introduction of an age limit was ignored, while the number of councillors has actually increased. The more recent Blueprint balked at reforming the Council, but wanted the execu-

tive committee to assume greater powers; the consensus is that this has not happened, despite the presence of it of big-brothers like Wiseman and the FA's vice-chairman Geoff Thompson, Bates, Dein, David Richards, and the former Football League chairman, David Shephshanks. Part of the reason is that all major decisions still have to be ratified either at the FA's AGM in June or at one of the two-monthly Council meetings.

Gentlemen in blue blazers or loose canons firing off £40,000 loans? Wiseman's piece of Welsh wizardry may eventually lead to a system of government somewhere between the two.



SPORT



GOOCH'S RALLYING CALL P25 • RICHARD WILLIAMS ON WEMBLEY'S DOGS OF YORE P24

Blair backs faltering 2006 bid

ENGLISH FOOTBALL launched a huge face-saving operation yesterday to convince the world it is still fit to host the 2006 World Cup finals. Support for England's bid was led by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who did not comment on the events that saw the resignation of the FA's chief executive, Graham Kelly, on Tuesday, but said: "As for our bid in 2006, believe me it is a very strong one. It is a very strong one indeed. If there is to be a bid from this part of the world then the British bid is far

FOOTBALL
BY NICK HARRIS

and away the best and we will keep on fighting the case for it." The Prime Minister's comments came on the same day that the Football Association of Wales confirmed that £3.2m of FA funds promised to it by Kelly and FA chairman Keith Wiseman - who has refused to resign over the affair - would have been "a gift" that would never have needed repaying.

"The money was a gift to the football community of Wales," John Hughes the president of FAW, said.

He denied allegations that a condition for receiving the money was that its payment would secure Welsh support for Wiseman's bid to become a vice-president of Fifa, world football's governing body.

He added, however: "We said in order that the FA have a strong case for their World Cup bid for 2006 it would be good for Mr Wiseman to be involved.

What we've done is completely above board."

The Welsh football authorities were told last Friday that the £3.2m would not be paid as the gift had not been sanctioned by the FA's finance committee. It will now receive £900,000 over three years instead of the £3.2m over six to eight years, according to Hughes.

A spokesman for Fifa said the affair should not unduly damage England's bid to host the 2006 event. "It is obviously primarily an internal matter for

the English FA and it is up to them to put their house in order. Our partners around the world are associations, not individuals. Most institutions have turmoil from time to time," he said.

He added that bids for 2006, in any case, will be judged not only on the input of national associations, but also on governments, police forces, telecommunications companies, broadcasters and everyone who might be involved in staging the event.

The Prime Minister's support came in Parliament yesterday as he was due to question the Sports Minister, Tony Banks, on the expensive globetrotting in support of England's bid that he has undertaken as part of the £9m, three-year campaign to bring the tournament to this country. He chose instead to steer a diplomatic course and support the bid.

Banks himself admitted that Germany, another country hoping to host the 2006 event, would be happy with the crisis

in the FA. "If I was a German I would be delighted with all the speculation," he said.

Sir Bobby Charlton, in Bangkok to promote England's 2006 bid at the Asian Games, said: "I don't think it makes any difference to us, to be honest."

"We know what we're doing, we have a good bid. If there are problems internally with the Football Association, we have to step back and just let it unfold."

Sir Geoff Hurst, whose hat-trick won the World Cup last

time England hosted it in 1966, said: "It is unfortunate but I don't think it will have any long-term effect. I am confident that once these events are over there will be no damage."

Alec McGivern, the England 2006 bid director, said: "We're determined to prove to the world that England will provide the best venue for the tournament. We have a very strong case and have no intention of being deflected from it."

The FA succession issue, page 23

Sampdoria bend rules to help Platt

SAMPDORIA ARE confident they can overcome the technical problems threatening their proposed appointment of David Platt as their team coach.

The former England international's appointment is expected to be formally announced at a press conference in Genoa today attended by both the club president, Enrico Mantovani, and Platt himself. Platt will take over from Luciano Spalletti who was sacked last Sunday following Sampdoria's 5-2 away defeat against Lazio that left the club just one point clear of the relegation zone.

Under the Italian football federation's regulations, however, Platt is not permitted to coach a Serie A side because he lacks the necessary coaching permit. But it appears that Sampdoria will get around this problem by appointing the 59-year-old Giorgio Veneri as coach and assistant to Platt. Veneri, who travelled to Genoa yesterday to supervise an afternoon training session, has had extensive lower-division experience, having coached the Serie C sides Lefie and Prato.

The idea, however, has not met with universal approval. The former Italian national team coach, Azeglio Vicini, currently the president of the Italian Coaches' Association, said that "Platt was in no way qualified to coach the Genoa club. He's not even qualified to coach the reserve side... according to the rules, there is no way that a category three

coach can coach the Sampdoria first team."

Platt's current position as the assistant to the English Football Association's technical director, Howard Wilkinson, may entitle him to a "category three" Italian permit. But Platt would need a "category one" permit to coach the first team.

Despite the negative opinion expressed by Vicini, it is understood that Sampdoria will find a way around this bureaucratic problem. A similar problem faced the former Blackburn Rovers manager Roy Hodgson when he took over Internazionale in 1995 and was resolved by Hodgson being appointed "technical director", with the Serie A licence being held by his assistant Giovanni Ardagnani.

Platt's appointment has, however, met with the approval of several of the club's senior players, some of whom played alongside him during his four-year spell with Bari, Juventus and Sampdoria between 1991 and 1995. "He may well be the right man. He's a former Sampdoria player, he was a great player and he knows his football," said the defender Marco Franceschetti. "He comes here at a difficult moment, a time when sadness and resignation need to be chased out of our dressing-room... we'll welcome him warmly."

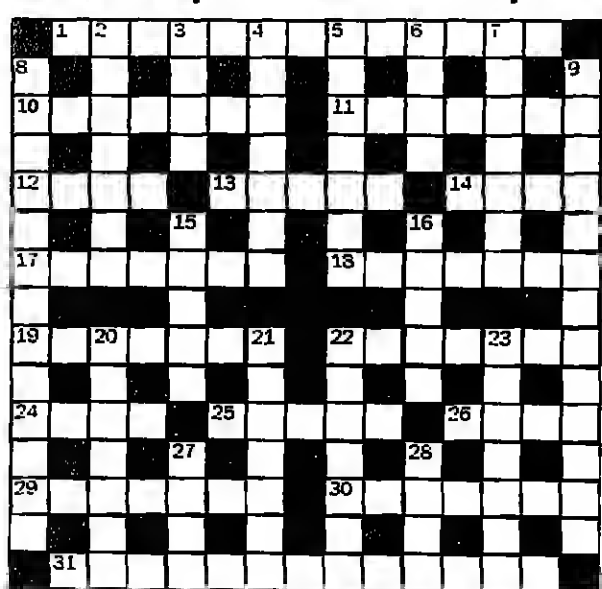
If the appointment is made today, Platt's first match will be against second-placed Milan on Sunday.



Thailand's Natee Thongsukkw (left) and Khaled Shzadah battle for the ball during Kuwait's 3-0 victory in the Asian Games football semi-finals in Bangkok yesterday. AP

THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No.3796 Thursday 17 December By Mass



ACROSS

- 1 Treatment for the rony hip, say? (13)
- 10 Detail from note spotted, read aloud (7)
- 11 Lethargic politician, one in grip of liquor (7)
- 12 Declare? Some crave rums (4)
- 13 Press for entry (5)
- 14 Car's divine, oot half (4)
- 17 Fits chairs (7)
- 18 Occasion for honouring hiled person (not king) (7)
- 19 Paper thrown around retreats, cultivated areas (7)
- 22 Disease, advanced - after joint of meat, it's said (7)
- 24 Vessels exporting British cereal (4)

DOWN

- 2 House fixes up society entertainer (7)
- 3 Veer, tack round lake (4)
- 4 Zero points - wasted opportunities (7)
- 5 Fish satisfies a party in cabin (7)
- 6 Head of porters after pound rise (4)
- 7 Teaching piano, produc-

ing audible harmonic sounds (7)

- 8 When someone gives, apparently, no tip? (8-5)
- 9 Party constituent (9,4)
- 15 Plant juice from American states (5)
- 16 Fish in crevice under opening of sluice (5)
- 20 Trifles an effervescent wine (7)
- 21 Drink with more grated big cheese (7)
- 22 Short suit gent's slung (4,3)
- 23 Poet of Spain, say, in index (7)
- 27 Shrinkage: no good for varnish (4)
- 28 Country type, rustic? Not entirely (4)

Ba gives Gullit a helpful hint

BY ALAN NIXON

THE FRENCH winger Ibrahim Ba is ready to cut his losses in Italy and bring some new year cheer to Newcastle United.

The 25-year-old international has confirmed that he has spoken to the Magpies' manager, Ruud Gullit, and admits that he would relish the chance to replace Keith Gillespie, who was sold to Blackburn yesterday, at St James' Park.

Ba, who has featured in seven of Milan's 13 games so far this season, said: "I know that Milan have already spoken to the English officials. I had a meeting with Gullit, and I would be prepared to leave in January."

Ba's suggestion that he will accept Newcastle's overtures will be welcomed by Gullit, but

it appears that his efforts to get his man in time for Saturday's Premiership clash with Leicester may be doomed to failure. Ba, who joined Milan from Bordeaux in 1997, has played 38 times for the Serie A side, but has struggled to command a regular place.

"I'm down, how couldn't I be? I never play," he said. Ba has been rated at £4.5m by his club, but Newcastle are confident of securing his signature for somewhere nearer £3.5m.

Gullit has been on the player's trail for some time, and the sale of Gillespie - United's only out-and-out winger - for £2.35m is an indication of how close he feels he is to striking

a deal. Gillespie, who would have been out of contract at the end of the season, was viewed by many as the man who would best provide the service for England captain, Alan Shearer, and recent £8m signing Duncan Ferguson.

Stephen Glass and the Peruvian Nolberto Solano are both promising wide players, but neither has Gillespie's pace, and Gullit's pursuit of Ba suggests that he has made a traditional winger an important part of his plans. If he does make the move to Tyneside, he will become the fifth French player in the last 12 months to cross the Channel.

But he will not have to set the world alight to improve on the distinctly limited success of his

compatriots during 1998. Only defender Laurent Charvet has forced his way into the first team on a regular basis, with the remaining four members of the Magpies' French foreign legion mustering just two competitive senior starts between them.

The former Auxerre striker Stéphane Guivarch claimed both of those before ending his fleeting stay to join Rangers for £3.5m, while the ex-Sunderland goalkeeper Lionel Perez is languishing in the reserves after losing his place as Shay Given's deputy to Steve Harper.

The defender David Terrier was released last summer by the former Newcastle manager Kenny Dalglish following a six-month stay without a first-team appearance.

Britain urged to refuse Olympic bid

BRITAIN SHOULD not bid for the Olympics until the International Olympic Committee has proved the bidding process is free of corruption, a member of parliament said yesterday.

Graham Stringer, who was the leader of Manchester city council during two failed bids for the 1996 and 2000 Olympics, said he welcomed a statement made by Marc Hodier, a senior IOC official, last week. Hodier claimed that agents had been trying for a decade to take cash from bidding cities in exchange for votes.

OLYMPIC GAMES

"The IOC has a moral obligation to prove to national Olympic committees, participating countries and bidding cities that the procedures they go through are non-corrupt, honest, fair and objective," Stringer said.

The IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, said on

Sunday that the organisation would expel any members found guilty of corruption. An IOC committee is currently investigating accusations of payments made in Salt Lake City's successful bid for the 2002 Winter Games.

Stringer, a member of the lower house, said he had first-hand experience of the behaviour of some IOC members

from his time at Manchester city council. He said that two IOC members, from different parts of the world, had tried to make money out of their visits.

Stringer said that one member had sought £12,000 reimbursement for money allegedly stolen from his hotel room. "When we said we would get the police to investigate he did not seem keen," Stringer

said he had not personally conducted the negotiations but was aware of them. There was no question of any reimbursement being paid, however. "It was merely a way of asking for cash."

The MP said another member had his air fare paid by Manchester when he had also had it paid by the IOC. "It took some time to get the money back," Stringer insisted, "that Manchester had been scrupulous in following guidelines set out by the IOC on gifts to members."

Published by Independent Newspapers (UK) Limited, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and printed at Wm. Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watford. Back copies available from Hulton-News, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

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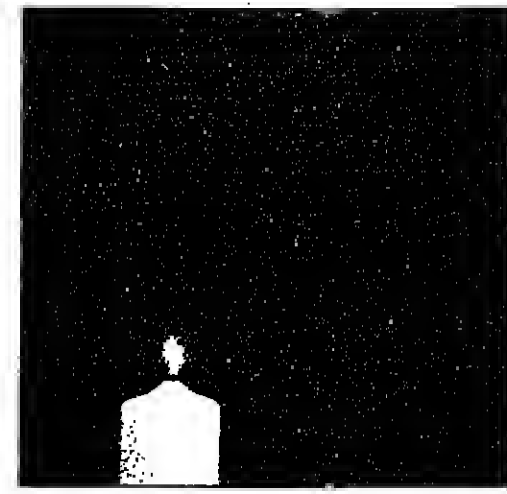
THURSDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

What do you give the man who has nothing?

Christmas with the Minimalists

BY ANN TRENEMAN



John Pawson is the King of Minimalism and famous for designing houses in which there is very little sign of human life, much less Santa Claus. There is stone and wood and steel and no decoration at all, unless you count the odd door handle (which he does). In his world, tinsel is unthinkable and plastic has not yet been invented. I think that Christmas for a Minimalist must be like being tortured with party favours for weeks on end. After all, what do you give a man who wants nothing? Certainly not a houseful of clutter, tat and winking reindeer. Mr Pawson stops me there. "No! I love Christmas. Christmas is not dead and neither is Minimalism!" he says in a "ho ho ho" type of voice.

He is between homes at the moment so I visit him at his sparse offices near King's Cross in central London. I know I've arrived, because the door has no handle. I think it would be a terrorist act to place a winking Santa on a plastic holly wreath upon it. As I arrive, Mr Pawson is busy ordering a four-metre bathtub for his new home. It is going to hold two tons of water. Minimalist home. Maximalist bathtub. He is a person of extremes. This becomes clear when I ask whether he likes Christmas trees. "Yes! Fantastic. Well, they can be beautiful. I can't remember what the best one is. But, my gosh, I hate them in the wrong place." I nod. Like the dining-room? "Hillsides! I hate them on hillsides. In Scotland there are ghastly planted forests which are completely the wrong trees."

Last year he had a right kind of tree: a Douglas fir to match the floorboards. "But I was jolly glad to get rid of it. Well, it completely changed the space." Any decorations? "No. We may have had lights." By this he means candles. "Highly dangerous, of course, but I think worth it."

There are lots of presents. "That seems to be maximum, at least as far as the children are concerned. Though I quite like wrapping things beautifully. It's almost nicer than what's inside."

John Pawson is putting a brave face on all of this, as have the other Minimalists whose spare spaces fill this story. But the truth is that Christmas and Minimalism are not made for each other. Tyler Brulé of the hedonist style magazine *Wallpaper* is brutal in his assessment: "Perhaps a true Minimalist would have no religion and therefore no Christmas. I think that for a true, die-hard Minimalist, Christmas has simply got to start at Heathrow." He's got that right. Every one of them seems to have plans to put an airport or two between themselves and the Season of Clutter.

John Pawson will be heading for South Africa, but not before the big day. His preparations are sparse. Cards for close friends only. He buys his wife clothes and what he calls practical underwear. He likes to get socks. "Very functional," he says. The cards that he receives are not displayed. "We don't have a mantelpiece," he explains.

He doesn't decorate, though he is not against certain natural substances. Mistletoe, for instance, is beautiful, as long as there is "a huge hush of it" and not merely a twig. Frost and mist are also terrific. And white, of course. Not to mention snow. Holly is fantastic, as long as it isn't mixed with anything. "I just do not like mixed," he says with such conviction that I can hear the full stop.

He says he doesn't want his Christmas to sound too art-directed. It doesn't really - just pated. In fact, he has highly romantic notions of carols and jolly meals and lots of good cheer. He grew up in Halifax, West Yorkshire, amid much tradition. But these are all experiences and come undecorated. "Christmas is not about things, is what I'm trying to say!" he finally says, exasperated.

I believe him, because Mr Pawson is a pretty obsessive man. In hotel rooms, for instance, he takes everything on display and hides it in drawers. When

the maids put the stuff back, he re-hides it. And so on. At Christmas, all cards go into a cupboard. He has developed a special system for dealing with what he calls Things of Temporary Interest. This, as it turns out, includes Christmas. Basically, the system seems to involve putting things into cupboards.

In many ways, I say, Minimalists are like everyone else except that they have bigger cupboards. Mr Pawson shakes his head. "No. For me, personally, it is about having just what I need. Obviously it is a daily thing to have to chuck stuff out. Things just seem to appear that you don't need." Like Christmas stuff? "There really is nothing to store except the Christmas tree stand," he says. Surely that is not a major problem? "Well, you have to look at it for 12 months. Ooo is almost tempted to buy ooo every year. Worth it, I think. You know bicycles are a big problem, too. They take up a huge amount of space wherever you put them. Where do you put them? In the bedroom? In the garden? It's a problem that hasn't been solved."

I think of this problem when I visit Doris Saatchi, who lives in a house in Mayfair that was designed by Mr Pawson, and whose front door also has no handle. Not because I run into a bicycle or anything but because, while I sit at the long and empty kitchen counter, I hear a phone ringing. Where is it? I look round and see very little. This is normal in a Minimalist house. The phone keeps on ringing. Ms Saatchi opens a cupboard. "Hello," she says. But of course! A problem solved.

Doris Saatchi is a Minimalist who believes in "letting it rip" in December. Christmas is for children and, though she has none herself, she buys lots of presents for the refugees housed by Westminster Council. On the day I visit her, her slab of a dining-room table is stacked with them. There are Walkie Talkies and Pretty Princess dress-up sets and Boggle games, and just about everything plastic that is sold in toy departments everywhere.

As we talk, she removes price tags and checks batteries. Most years, she holds a huge Christmas party for her friends and their children. She says the children love her house because there are no china figurines to break, or lamps to upset. I look at the wall, on which flashes an Angela Bulloch artwork involving four Belisha beacons. It is called *Daylight Four*. No china decorations, perhaps, but no shortage of BritArt either. There is a Damien Hirst in the front room.

Most years, there is also a huge Christmas tree - a 10-foot-tall one that she lops off to fit under her eight-and-a-half-foot ceiling. "It is totally glitzy, glamorous, with lots of baubles. Lots. It's one thing to live simply all year round - I wouldn't live any other way - but I think it is nice, once a year, to break out and let all your vulgar visual impulses out. Mine is hardly a designer tree. I gather that some people now actually get designers to do their tree, to theme their tree." She sounds incredulous. "I think that is really, well, just out for me."

So lots of children, lots of meals, lots of goodwill. She sends a few cards but gives no presents to friends or relatives. She has told her brothers that she is giving presents to the refugees in their names. Nor is she big on decorating. This year, that has been restricted to a twig with berries in the stone-clad atrium. She doesn't display her cards, and recycles them via the Post Office or gives them to schools. But she likes getting them. "I like to take trouble at Christmas. We shouldn't complain about the trouble of Christmas. It's easy for some people to simply sit behind their desk and write a big cheque and get somebody to go off and buy presents for this person or that. That is all very corporate. I think that is such a great pity. That is not about personal relationships."

This is a theme with Ms Saatchi, who is rich, of course. She does not like the way the media keep

treating Christmas as a problem. She has no immediate family and misses this, I think. "It's only once a year, and I think you should be grateful that you have a family. You can't choose your family and you can your friends, but the truth is it's not the same. It's much better to have a family, even if they get on your nerves terribly." She strokes her beautiful blue Burmese cats. They look Minimalist, as does Ms Saatchi herself with her sleek, whitish hair and grey trousers and white shirt. She is a Minimalist, but this is a warm house.

Next stop is Deptford in south-east London. By now I know what to look for: a door with no handle. I find a black one and push. Voila! I walk into a Japanese-type garden with stone pebbles, reflecting pools and a silver frog. I see a house through a huge window. Where is the door? I give up and shout. A man runs down the stairs and opens the window, which is, in fact, a door.

Welcome to the home of Chris Mazeika and William Richards. They are 36 and are both dressed in black, by coincidence they say. They are jolly good fun and theatrical, though not very Christmassy. No cards, no presents, no anything really. Their house knows the pitter-patter of tiny reindeer only because Harvey Nichols used it for its Christmas photo-shoot, as did a Sunday newspaper last year. The latter left a rather stupendous Christmas tree ice sculpture in the pebble garden. It took a week and a half to melt. Chris says he would prefer a fake snow avalanche-type thing, but William says that would be "too dooc".

Last year, they spent the season in Sri Lanka. This year they are heading for Lithuania. Chris says his roots are there. Another big attraction seems to be potatoes. "I have a fantasy about a Christmas with everything made out of potatoes," says Chris. "Potato wine, potato soup, potato cake." He is really into this. It is, he says, going to be a really minimal potato Christmas.

They insist they are not anti-Christmas or anti-Maximalist either, and then become rather dramatic for no apparent reason.

William: "It's not like we think everything else stinks. I tell you, I would love to fire-bomb *Changing Rooms*, though."

Chris: "You really don't need to have this reaction, William."

William: "But I am having that reaction! It is all about effect."

Chris: "You can say that about a lot of things. Some Minimalism is about effect."

William: "It's formulaic."

Chris: "It is a form of abuse!"

I interrupt. Any Christmas decorations planned? William points to the only thing on the wall, it is blue, square and glitzy. "That's a Christmas decoration from last year!" It is, in fact, a work of art by Martin McGinn, from Hale's Gallery in Deptford. They turn out to have quite a few Christmas ornaments - hidden in the cupboards. There is an entire choir of candles, shaped like choirboys, from the Forties. These were bought at Deptford market. Chris runs downstairs to retrieve a Jesus from the wardrobe. He is a sad affair, with no arms or legs, and draped in rosary. There is also a crib from the Salvation Army Care & Share shop on Deptford High Street.

They line all these things up on a glass shelf, but it is only about 10 minutes before Chris jumps up. "Too much. Can't stand it," he says, clearing away Jesus. "Yes, it is too much," agrees William. Soon there are no decorations left on the shelf that overlooked the white room that overlooks the pebble garden in deepest Deptford.

As I leave, I realise that I now know what you give a Minimalist for Christmas. Forget socks. Think door handles. But streamlined, of course. In fact, so streamlined that they may be invisible.

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EDUCATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Pinochet's progress

Sir: It must be insisted that Pinochet be required to explain his actions regarding his illegal usurpation of power and the ensuing murders of many of his compatriots by him and his armed forces. Disregarding the barrage of propaganda unleashed by all involved in this affair, he must be brought to justice, if only for the international community to show a red light to such individuals. He was not the legally elected representative of his people and, even if this had been so, no leader has a remit to commit mass murder to achieve and maintain power.

Those opposing Pinochet's extradition are, in the main, the Chilean middle-classes, the right-wing press in the UK and leaders, past and present, of the British Conservative Party. Part of the motivation inherent in this opposition is that in 1973 certain well-known right-wing international agencies were involved in the conspiracy to ensure Pinochet's success. Without this aid and comfort, Pinochet might well have lost the game. There are those who advocate Pinochet's return to Chile to face the music. If he is permitted to return home, one thing is certain: there will be no trial.

It could of course be said that "people in glasshouses should not throw stones." The history of many former colonial powers would not bear truthful scrutiny in this regard. Notwithstanding this, whatever the outcome of this affair, it will have an enormous effect on the global perception of what is right and proper regarding the government and governing of any community. If we fail in our task to bring Pinochet to justice, then God help us.
KEITH PETT
Whitchurch, Hampshire

Sir: Whilst I fully endorse Mr Straw's decision to allow General Pinochet to be extradited to Spain, there are all too many on the left whose reaction to the general's fate can be read as sanctimonious ("That he will be made to face his past is uplifting", 10 December). These are the very people who have glossed over the widespread abuse of human rights in former and still existent communist states.

There are now groups working for the arrest and extradition of Cuba's Fidel Castro so that he may stand trial for the murders committed by his regime.

Will Harold Pinter and Ken Livingstone join them or will they be like so many leftist intellectuals of the past who reserved their invective for an Orwell, a Camus or a Koestler who knew and said openly that the firing squad and the torturers could also be composed of Communists?
JOHN NORMAN
London N12

Sir: General Pinochet's lawyers base their appeal against the Law Lords' decision on accusations of bias against Lord Hoffmann, who is chairman of Amnesty International Charity Ltd. Since when was a "bias" towards universal human rights, or against their violation, reprehensible in a senior judge in a democratic country? If we accept this usage, we run the risk of unwittingly accepting the prejudices of Pinochet and his supporters, both in Chile and in Britain. Let us watch our language.
JANE FREELAND
Southampton

Sir: Whatever one's views on the Pinochet affair, we should be grateful that attention has been drawn to Lord Hoffmann's connection with Amnesty International. It seems uncomfortable possibly that a senior member of the judiciary supports human rights and is opposed to torture. Worse, it appears that he does this for no remuneration and may even permit these sentiments to influence his judgement. If this is true of one of them, might it not be true of others? I think we should be told.
ROBERT CANTON
Keynought, Nottinghamshire



Christmas Workers No 4: the poultry plucker. Ken Smith (centre) plucks a turkey at Peachcroft Farm at Abingdon in Oxfordshire

Tom Pilston

Sir: No, Peter Skellern (letter, 11 December) isn't the only person hoping for an extradition application by Argentina for "the Baroness". Just like Pinochet, she is unlikely to be brought to justice in her own country.
JOHN HALL
Telford, Shropshire

Sir: There is something hideously Orwellian about a situation in which holding a murderous dictator accountable for his actions can be described as "shameful" and inviting him for tea is presented as an act of patriotism. It may come as some grain of comfort to Mr Skellern to reflect that the source of such perverted thinking has long since become a piece of irrelevant political jargon more to be pitied than extradited.

In similar Orwellian vein is the suggestion that having a passionate belief in human rights somehow disqualifies a person from being a judge. In Pinochet's Chile, perhaps. I wonder what 5000-an-hour legal brain dreamt that one up.
JAMES HOLT
Storrington, West Sussex

Sir: In the spirit of fairness it should be remembered that it was Chile who rescued Shackleton's men from Elephant Island in 1917. Shackleton had to leave them there while he and five others set off in a lifeboat to sail the perilous 800 miles to South Georgia for help. After four failed attempts, the Chilean steamer *Yelcho*, under the command of Captain Luis Pardo, broke through the pack-ice to reach the stranded crew of the *Endurance*.
WILLIAM F LONG
Loughlin, Essex

Lament for Ulster

Sir: Once again we have the opportunity of reading David McKitterick's eloquent lament on the need for movement from both sides on the painful issue of decommissioning ("This row about

guns will not unravel the peace process", 15 December). My worry, and I'm sure the dreadful fear of others, is that the unionist people are being led to believe that the key to the future peace of Northern Ireland is the surrender of arms by the terrorists.

Whilst the arguments for decommissioning and the extraction of the gun from Irish politics are wholly admirable, in themselves they do not bring us to any new place.

From a security point of view, the army and police would not behave as though the security risk had diminished just because a truckload of old guns turned up in South Armagh. The extension of this would possibly be a new round of back-to-the-wall arguments by unionists of how they could be expected to go into government with republicans whom they could not trust, who might possibly have more guns under different labels.

Whilst the unionists, along with the nationalists, voted for the Good Friday agreement, we have not

subsequently had any announcement from unionist politicians that the key to future long-term peace lies in the fact that unionists must for the first time make real efforts to make nationalists feel included in all aspects of Northern Irish society. Announcements and behaviour of this nature would secure the constitutional basis of Northern Ireland and kill off the utter rubbish talk about this being the first step toward a united Ireland.

If only the irresistible force of Mr Trimble could bring the unionist people to this recognition, then they would realise how strong a position we all are in.
JOHN COOK
Belfast

Sir: According to David McKitterick ("IRA says no to weapons handover", 12 December), David Trimble insisted in Oslo that the IRA must decommission its arms before Sinn Féin could be admitted to the new cross-party Executive in Northern Ireland. In fact, what

Mr Trimble asked for was "a serious beginning". In the light of the history of this issue, his comment that "that is not too much to ask for" seems restrained.

In December 1993, at the time of the Downing Street Declaration, both governments said that decommissioning would have to take place before Sinn Féin could enter all-party negotiations. This requirement was progressively watered down in the face of Sinn Féin's and the IRA's insistence that they would decommission at the end of the negotiations but not before. In January 1996, the International Body chaired by Senator Mitchell suggested the compromise that some decommissioning should take place in parallel with negotiations. In the event the negotiations took place without decommissioning and Sinn Féin/IRA were not even held to their original position of decommissioning on their conclusion.

The policy of making concessions to republicans in the

hope of a response has not worked. Here is a suggestion.

General de Chastelain's Commission should draw up a timetable for decommissioning such that the process would be complete by 23 May 2000 as required by the Agreement. Sinn Féin would be admitted to the Executive on the day that the first arms were handed over or destroyed. The British, Irish and American governments would give a solemn undertaking that if there were any slippage in the timetable, or any failure on the part of Sinn Féin to co-operate fully with the Commission, the Commission itself would be the judge of that. Sinn Féin would immediately lose its place.
STEPHEN FLOWDEN
London NW1

Post Office in hock

Sir: I am a frequent user of the Post Office and Royal Mail; it is my practice to send Christmas and birthday cards and to send and receive letters. The Post Office pays out my pension, issues the TV licence and is capable of handling other banking transactions through the Giro system. In all of these functions I have always received good service at modest cost and have never had cause for complaint.

Why then does it need to borrow money ("Post Office's monopoly on letters to go", 8 December)? As a government service it has no competition; it has 100 per cent of its market; it is not a business with shareholders to satisfy with ever-increasing dividends. It has a constant revenue stream from which any further developments can be funded without recourse to any lender. No one in their right mind would hazard their future by putting themselves in hock to the loan sharks in order to gamble when they have a guaranteed income. So why then? Is it just that someone can see an opportunity to make money at others' expense?
DAVID MALCOLM
Leicester

IN BRIEF

technology. In fact, the purpose of the meeting to which you refer was to discuss those concerns, not ignore them.
PHILIP S ANGELL
Director, Corporate Communications
Monsanto
Washington DC

Sir: Your report (10 December) that Monsanto is refusing to "halt tests" using "Terminator" technology was misleading. Monsanto is not conducting any tests. This technology is currently owned by Delta & Fine Land Company, though we have announced our interest in acquiring it legally. We have no direct control over its use or development. We are also very aware of the concerns that have been expressed about this new

Sir: The Director General (Tourism) India, would like to make emphatically clear to all your readers that the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, has clarified that the ASI has no plan to close the Taj Mahal, except on Mondays for maintenance and cleaning ("India's latest plan to attract more tourists: closing the Taj Mahal", 7 November).
M PATTANAIK
Assistant Director
Government of India Tourist Office
London W1

Sir: Regarding the review by Donald Cameron Watt of Brian Aldiss's *In the Waking of an Eye* (9 December), I write from the shop address three stories below his old room at Oriol to announce that Sanders is alive and well at 104 The High. Although we are no longer a bookshop in the strictest



MILES KINGDON
Even I, a benighted Englishman, know who the French Prime Minister is. It is Scott Joplin

on their paper "Can you try and find out how many Englishmen in the street know who Tony Blair is?" or

was it "Who on earth is Tony Blair?" I had a look at the paper: "Qui est Tony Blair?" "He is the Prime Minister," I said.

They looked at each other. "Prime Minister? What is that? Qu'est-ce que c'est que le PM?" It was beginning to dawn on me that these two little French girls were not terribly interested in politics. If they didn't know who Tony Blair was, or what a Prime Minister was, then they probably didn't even know who their own French Prime Minister was or what he did. Why, even I, a benighted Englishman, know who the French Prime Minister is. It is Scott Joplin. No, not Scott Joplin, but a name like that. "Well, a Prime Minister is the man who... or woman who..."

Who what? There flashed through my mind all the articles I had read recently which explained that the PM no longer has any real power; that it is all in the hands of the big global corporations, that the PM can only tinker with the system, playing at devolution, playing at reforming the Upper House, and so on. There also flashed through my mind all the other articles I had read entitled "Who is Tony Blair?" or "Will the real Tony Blair stand up, please?", in which it was made clear either that Tony Blair is a genuine politician, or that he was nothing of the sort, only a power-hungry manipulator... Somewhere, no doubt, there is an article explaining why a power-mad manipulator like Tony Blair should want to occupy a post with no power... Still, as an in-touch British jour-

Asylum with dignity

Sir: I welcome David Aaronovitch's article challenging those who scapegoat asylum-seekers in this country ("Who are these asylum-seekers? They're people like my grandparents", 15 December). The hardship endured here by asylum-seekers is a national disgrace. I believe that an array of practical measures to promote humanitarian dignity and equal respect are crucial at this time.

The Government's decision to proceed with the withdrawal of cash benefits for asylum-seekers is a policy of blame, which will condemn asylum-seekers to further hardship. The Government's intentions are disturbing. As set out in July's White Paper, the expensive, segregated provision of last resort without choice, cash or autonomy at a location subject to the whim of an official, within a framework of deference, is the spectre of the Poor Law. This proposed administrative system runs a high risk of stigmatisation, social isolation, down-grading and institutional neglect. Secondly, to quote the shameful experience under the National Assistance Act as evidence, to scrap all cash benefits is a grave insult.

The Government is now looking with local authorities for local consortia to step in as an interim measure to push for the dispersal of asylum-seekers across the country. This is a "less bad option" than having an inefficient Home Office agency centre-stage, but likely effects are to place asylum-seekers in isolated hard-to-let estates with inadequate resources, and to leave many others in dire need, relying on begging and charity.
TERRY PATTERSON
Committee for Non-Racist Benefits
Manchester

Kids need exercise

Sir: It was good to see the issue of school travel nesting amongst the fag butts, hamburgers and video games in your coverage of the Government's new survey of children's health ("Flabby youngsters put health at risk", 15 December). Research undertaken for us by the Institute of Child Health reveals the importance of changing patterns of school travel for both child and adult health.

Although walking to school has declined in recent years, 49 per cent of school trips are still on foot. Walking to school represents 41 per cent of the average distance walked by all children annually. It is therefore a vital component of children's overall physical activity at a time when children take less and less exercise. As your report emphasises, childhood patterns of exercise are likely to persist into adult life. Today's sedentary child is tomorrow's heart attack victim.

Parental concern about traffic danger (often caused by other parents on the school run) and "stranger danger" are the main causes of the decline in school walking. These issues, and the health implications of longer school trips arising from "parent choice" in schools, need urgent attention as part of the Government's programme to improve childhood health.
BEN FLOWDEN
Director
The Pedestrians Association
London EC1

Lording it

Sir: I would suggest a solution to the Prime Minister's problem with the upper house: the appointment of contract employed Peers. Give honourable, intelligent Labour faithfuls a weekly Pullman ticket, bed, board, £500 expenses and treat them like Lords for a week in exchange for voting as necessary to support his Government.

I would be a volunteer, as would a considerable number of my friends currently retired early. It would make us feel useful again. Before Christmas please - the money would be handy.
CHRIS MCPARLIN
Altrincham, Greater Manchester

French schoolgirls from outer space boggled my mind

The other day I was stopped in the streets of Bath by two young girls who wanted a questionnaire at me and wanted to know if they could ask me a question.

Normally, when I am stopped by females waving questionnaires, I will either run like mad or lie through my teeth to get away, because although these consumer-oriented harpies like to tell you it will only take a moment, they always put you through at least a quarter of an hour of hellish questions.

This time it was different. For a start, the girls were only about twelve. For another start, they were French. And the single question they asked was very simple: "Please, do you know who is Tony Blair?"

I have often seen gangs of

French children wandering through Bath, so it is clearly a favourite target for cross-Channel school outings, and most of them carry little study sheets and questionnaires which must be designed to focus their visit and prevent them spending all their time shopping and shopping.

I wonder if the French realise that they have a reputation in the whole of the south of England for being compulsive shoppers? I have been told about this by shopkeepers as far apart as London and the Channel Islands. If the English are a nation of shopkeepers, then the French are popularly supposed to be a nation of shoplifters. Personally, I think that if there is any truth in it, it is probably because it is a statistical certainty. Most of the foreign shoppers are French, so it

stands to reason that most of the foreign shoplifters will be French as well. Still, it is unnerving to go into a shop in Bath and see a notice saying All Shoplifters Will Be Prosecuted written in French and no other language...

And I have often wondered what questions these young French persons were asked in their wanderings round Bath, what ingenious artistic, historical or architectural posers they were being posed, and now I know. It was: "Do you know who is Tony Blair?" a bit of information, to be honest, which they could have picked up without leaving France.

Ah, but were they trying to find out who Tony Blair was, or whether I knew who he was? Was it my ignorance or their ignorance they were exploring? Was the question

was it "Who on earth is Tony Blair?"

I had a look at the paper: "Qui est Tony Blair?"

"He is the Prime Minister," I said.

They looked at each other.

"Prime Minister? What is that?"

Qu'est-ce que c'est que le PM?

It was beginning to dawn on me that these two little French girls were not terribly interested in politics.

If they didn't know who Tony Blair was, or what a Prime Minister was, then they probably didn't even know who their own French Prime Minister was or what he did.

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"Well, a Prime Minister is the man who... or woman who..."

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The office of the President deserves better than this

WILL THE Comeback Kid make it this time? No one at this point really knows. His fate, as the House of Representatives prepares to vote on his impeachment, hangs in a balance that could still be tilted by a midnight call, a last-minute intervention or even some dramatic gesture by the President himself. The odds are moving against him, but he has fought himself out of a corner before and may yet do so again.

The harder question for the United States, and the rest of the world, is: do we really want him to survive this time? No one - except for a hard core of a Republican right that still hankers for revenge for the ousting of Richard Nixon - actually wants to see the indignity of full impeachment proceedings. It would do nothing for American democracy and even less for the country's position in the world.

But then Bill Clinton cannot be said to be doing much for either, even without a trial. Only a month ago he seemed to have everything in his hands. The US public had voted clearly that it did not wish his private life to become a public issue. His chief tormentor, Newt Gingrich, had resigned. Nothing, it seemed, would prevent him coasting, soiled but not beaten, until the end of his term.

That assumption, to put it mildly, has proved to be mistaken. Clinton, like almost all the commentators, seemed to forget the simple point that the impeachment vote in the House of Representatives would be made by the outgoing Congress, not the newly elected one, which does not take office until January. The Republican majority has proved determined not to let their catch slip away so easily while they still have him in their grasp.

Their partisanship is far from edifying. But then Clinton himself has behaved little better. Sensing freedom from his pursuers, he has acted as though his problems were over. It is not so much that he has been triumphalist, as that he has been complacent. And that, to his critics and to those who remained undecided, was not good enough for a man who - in their eyes - had perjured himself and abused his office for sexual gratification.

This is the "character question" that has overhung the President from the beginning of the Lewinsky affair and is so damaging to him at this moment. What exactly he did in the Oval Office or elsewhere with a young intern totally besotted with having a relationship with the President is nobody's business but those directly concerned. The public may be interested, but it can claim no right to know. That is what most voters felt last November, and it still holds true today. But the American public and the politicians appear to have equally come to the conclusion that he didn't behave well, that he did lie about it, and that his constant evasions and sophistry are bringing the office of the President into disrepute.



This is more than a matter of partisan politics. It is about office, and Clinton's ability to exercise that office. When the first question asked of the American President on arriving on a crucial peace mission in Israel is "Mr President, are you going to resign?", it is clear that Clinton cannot exercise real leadership. There is always the argument that this does not really matter in domestic terms, although Americans take a lofty view of the position, if not the job, of President.

But it does matter to a world where Iraq is being threatened with bombs, where the Middle East peace process is falling apart, where Kosovo continues to ignite the Balkans and where Asia has been thrown into turmoil by recession.

It is time that Bill Clinton ended the prevarication and the semantics. He owes it to his supporters at home and his allies abroad to come clean and accept that he has abused the highest office in the land. If that does not stop the rot, then he has only one course that leaves him and the US with any dignity - to resign.

Final whistle for the amateurs in blazers

NOTHING HAS quite so become Graham Kelly's time at the Football Association as the manner of his leaving, for at least he went with dignity. Which is more than can be said for his chairman, Keith Wiseman.

Wiseman's refusal to go quietly says as much about the way the Football Association is structured as about himself. Giving away "a gift" of more than £3m without board sanction or corporate supervision is a sackable offence in any business. To say that it was done in the interests of securing the World Cup for Britain in 2006 only makes it worse. If England really wants to play in the world league, they need to show that the nation that founded so many sports in its public schools now has sports administrators who are imbued with a totally professional outlook.

But as the events of this week have shown, this is the very quality that is lacking in the Football Association. Like so many other sports in Britain - cricket, athletics, tennis, both codes of rugby, to name but a few - the governing body of football is largely a ramshackle club of amateurs helplessly trying to cope with a modern world of professionalism. Balancing the demands of fans with those of business is not easy. But this is all the more reason why it can no longer be left to the men in blazers, many of them seemingly more interested in securing cup final tickets than in running the game efficiently.

For the moment, however, the focus is on football. At least the departure of Mr Kelly provides an opportunity, and a motive, for the FA to restructure itself by improving its management, reforming its controlling bodies and putting real teeth into its regulation. To start with, we must hope it appoints a new chief executive with the vision, toughness and single-mindedness that are so essential to succeed in sport but so lacking in its management.

Those devoted to 'higher causes' know FA about management

DAVID WISSEM, Graham Kelly. If ever a man habitually wore the proverbial face of a bulldog sipping piss from a nettle, it was the chief executive of the Football Association. His miserable features made great copy. But even more than missing him, I wonder at the circumstances of his departure. He resigned rather than wait to be sacked after a six-hour meeting of the FA's executive committee, which had been discussing the circumstances of a £3.2m loan to the Welsh FA.

This loan had not, apparently, been authorised by any of the FA's myriad committees or councils, but had been agreed by Kelly and the FA chairman, coroner and ex-tennis star Keith Wiseman. Only a letter from Wales requesting the first tranche of 400 grand alerted the FA grandees to the existence of this loan.

But what had been going on? There is no suggestion that this was one of those bung things that some football people used to get involved in, and by which they stood to gain large fortunes. No, this was more probably a political loan, granted in return for Cardiff's supporting Wiseman in his attempt to get elected to football's governing body, FFA. Where, as well as cutting as fine a dash as a guy in sheepskin can, he would have been in a much better position to push the case for England's bid to stage the 2006 World Cup.

This bid is hugely important. Tony Banks, apparently, spends his time on little else, criss-crossing the globe in his efforts to bring Brazil, Argentina, Italy et al back to England after 40

years. The boost to the English game of hosting the competition cannot be overstated. Even sober, sensible, middle-aged men like me (and Tony Blair) go weak in the bladder at the thought of it. It would dominate our national life, gloriously for months. Oh, the merchandising! And this may, I suppose, be the reason why Mr Wiseman has not yet resigned, despite a vote of no confidence in him. He may yet expect to be vindicated.

But, if the allegations are true, what a silly sod he is. Mostly for not realising that the old days are gone. When David Mellor described the FA as a "shambles" yesterday, he was talking about the lack of professionalism that appeared to characterise the association's doings in everything from the Welsh business to the assistance given by the head of communications to Glenn Hoddle's ill-advised (though lucrative) book about the last World Cup. I would simply add this for now: the FA has always been a shambles. Shambles can exist relatively happily for years and years. But it is now far harder to survive in glorious disarray.

Ask Mary Allen. In her recently published diary of her short time as the chief executive for the Royal Opera House, *A House Divided*, Allen reveals an organisation in whose dictionary no word as Germanically taut and disciplined as "shambles" appears. Within a few days of taking over, she is told that a projected deficit that she assumed to be £800,000 is now nearer £5m. On 30 September 1997, she discovers an extra £1m gap because VAT has not been accounted for



DAVID AARONOVITCH
The BBC was heading for an extinction crisis, just like the Football Association and the Royal Opera House

The following day she decides that a Cuban dancer should be paid a phenomenal amount because: "There is no point in having a Royal Ballet if it's not a good Royal Ballet." But she finds, on 7 October, that others in the ROH have the same view, and the *Figaro* sets are over budget by £40,000. The next day she is told that there is an immediate and unanticipated cash flow crisis of £800,000. A day later there is an imminent cash gap of £2m.

She despairs. "How can any organisation be so utterly disorganised, have such a complete disregard for its own health and be so irredeemably hopeless at communicating within itself, as to allow a further £1m loss to lie around, undiscovered, unidentified for four weeks during the budgeting process? I want to burst into tears." Allen's problems, as she de-

scribes them, are horrific. The management structures are chaotic; the artistic managers do not feel themselves responsible for finances, and her various boards and committees pull her in every direction at once. Unsurprisingly, Allen's tenure lasted less than seven months.

When she first arrived, Allen described the ROH as being like Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast, a vast, rambling, semi-dilapidated castle, run according to ancient custom and in which you could become lost for ever in a maze of corridors, rooms and broken towers.

It was the same word that I used about the BBC when I first joined its Lime Grove operation 10 years ago. The Beeb owned large numbers of crumbling old buildings, in which forgotten staff laboured on past projects; posts advertised at low levels of pay disguised huge and unwieldy overtime payments, which cost a fortune to administer; budgets were notional, with resources allocated by unit and not price. As a result, no one had any idea about how much anything cost. Personal contact and favours were the mortar that filled the cracks. Memos went from MEWSPNCATel to MED-NPRad, and were returned.

The BBC was heading for an extinction crisis, just like the FA and the ROH. It faced a completely new competitive situation, a government that did not love it, and the end of the gravy train, the annual cash bonanza caused by the switch from black-and-white to colour licences. Like the other two, the organisation served a "higher cause". Theirs were the

People's Game and the Nation's Cultural Heritage: the BBC's was Public Service Broadcasting.

So Michael Checkland and John Birt, in particular, introduced management to the corporation. You know, like goals, priorities, systems, bar charts, graphs, communication exercises, objectives, appraisal, so that no one in the whole place could claim (no matter how artistic and removed from the common treadmill they were) to be ignorant of what was expected of them. A cost was found for everything, a limited internal market was introduced - more to change the prevailing culture than simply to save money.

It was, in many ways, awful. All of a sudden we creative types found ourselves writing endless reports, attending interminable courses. Management skills superseded visionary contributions to popular culture, when it came to becoming an actual manager. Morale, it was said, was at a catastrophically low ebb. A long moan went up in 1988, and is still to be heard whenever BBC people meet together.

But it worked. The BBC was not privatised, was not stripped of its licence fee, did not go bankrupt as its costs soared and its revenue declined, did not lose key services, stop producing drama or news. There weren't even (ssshhh!) that many job losses. It required obstinacy clarity and a willingness to court unpopularity to achieve. Management sucks, just like government and parents. But, also like them, it's a whole lot better than the alternative. Ask Graham Kelly.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The Americans have been looking for an excuse to bomb Iraq for a long time."
Tony Benn,
Labour MP for Chesterfield

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"All colours will agree in the dark."
Francis Bacon,
English philosopher

Will you give Mary a bed this Christmas?



At 16, Mary ran away from a life of abuse. Today she is homeless. Could you sleep easy on Christmas Eve knowing she was shivering in a bus shelter?

You can help keep Mary, and thousands of vulnerable people like her, safe and warm over Christmas. With £25 from you, Crisis can provide a warm bed, hot meals, clean clothes and someone to talk to at one of our shelters.

As the days count down to Christmas, nearly 10,000 homeless people are counting on Crisis. We're counting on you. Our service depends on public donations. So please send your £25 today - in time to help us buy the bedding, food and clothes we need to bring Mary in from the cold.

Countdown to Christmas

Yes, I'll keep homeless people warm:

☐ £15 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 ☐ £250* other £

I enclose a cheque made payable to Crisis. OR debit my:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Switch* other

Card no. /

* Last three digits of Switch card no. / / / Switch issue no. /

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* Gifts of £250 or more are worth almost a third extra to us under Gift Aid

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Address

Postcode

OR please call our freephone donation line 0800 038 48 38

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MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

US comment on the prospective vote to impeach President Clinton

THE REPUBLICAN leadership apparently has the power to prevent censure from coming to a vote in the House. But if Republicans mean to do this, they should acknowledge that they are exercising power to prevent the very conscience vote they claim to be holding. They should not denigrate the power and authority of the Congress under the Constitution. Censure is a resolution of one sort or another, have been debated on numerous occasions, and some

have even been passed. While their efficacy can be debated, there is no real question of their legitimacy.

The Washington Post
SINCE CLINTON will not do the honorable thing, the House must do the right thing, which is to vote to impeach Clinton and have him tried in the Senate. This is about duty, honor and upholding the Constitution. Lying under oath is an impeachable offense. The Senate

needs to have the opportunity to decide if the charges brought before the House are true. If they are, then Clinton must be removed from office.
Salt Lake City Desert News

CONGRESSIONAL CENSURE must condemn his conduct and include an agreement that he will not seek or accept federal office after his term ends. To be held accountable means to

accept the consequences of one's actions. Forfeiting future office is a consequence more meaningful than a fine, which Clinton would have others pay. Clinton can yet restore some honor to his name by coming clean with Congress and the American people.
Seattle Times

HISTORY WILL condemn the Republicans for using their constitutional powers as an instrument of partisan

vengeance. [They were] intended as a scalpel for the cutting out of cancers, not for the excising of unsightly pimples. We say that from the platform of our record of consistently criticizing Clinton, his failure to lead by example and his abandonment of his constitutional duty to defend and uphold the law. He is, in sum, a man you cannot trust whether you have his handshake, signature or word on a Bible.
The New York Times

Callaghan condemns PM's spin doctors

LORD CALLAGHAN of Cardiff, the former prime minister, yesterday urged Tony Blair to rein in the Government's army of "spin doctors" and warned him not to distance Labour from its trade union foundations.

Asked about the high-profile political aides who seek to secure favourable media coverage for their ministers, Lord Callaghan said: "I don't like it. I dislike being spun. I would certainly not carry a pager myself - but then I am so old-fashioned about these things."

Lord Callaghan admitted that, during his spell as prime minister from 1976-79, the government did try to influence the press and broadcasters. "Of course, there was a certain amount of spinning, but we were much more amateur about it. We regarded it as a bit of a laugh, frankly."

He joined the criticism that Parliament has been downgraded since Labour regained power last year. Mr Blair has reduced the two weekly sessions of Prime Minister's Questions to one and rarely takes part in Commons votes.

"I fear the House of Commons is less important today than it was. I very much regret it," he told BBC Radio 4. But Lord Callaghan appeared to defend Mr Blair against allegations that he is a "control freak." He said that was "a reflection of the extreme way the party went in the Eighties."

The former premier said he regarded the Blair administration as a true successor to his own government, citing the actions of Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

and David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, as being "in the true traditions of the Labour Party."

Lord Callaghan supported Mr Blair's goal of forging a national consensus for the Government's policies. But he said it should be done "whilst adhering to our history - by that I mean that trade unions should continue to play a prominent role in the Labour Party."

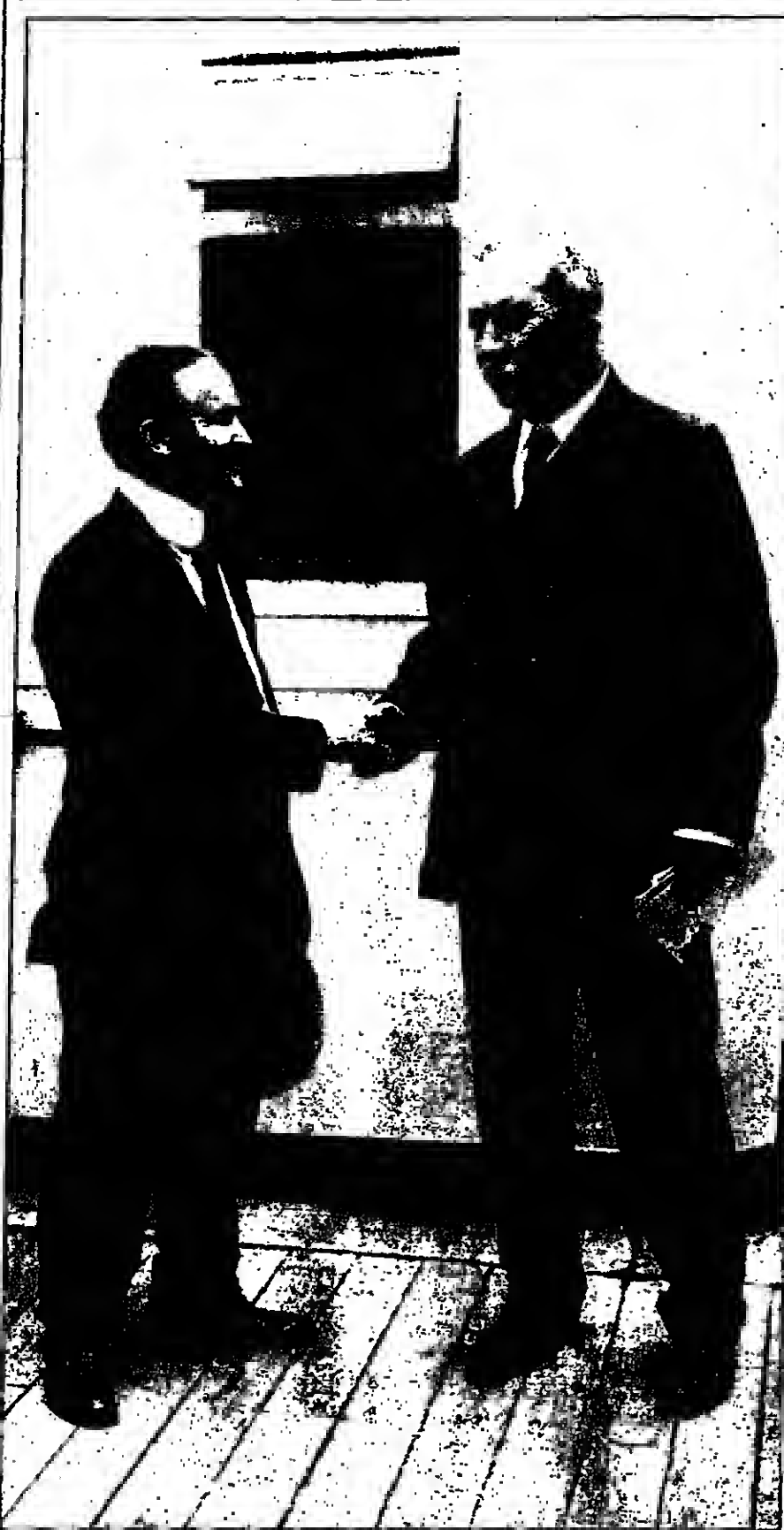
Lord Callaghan suggested that New Labour's spell in the political centre ground might not last, and that traditional left-right hostilities might resume.

He said British politics was "a kind of pendulum" in which parties went from one extreme to another and then rested in the middle. Although there was now "a period of calm", argument would return.

"What Tony Blair has to achieve - and I expect he will - is to ensure that despite the argument, the country gets a clear view of what is going on."

Mr Blair seems to have taken heed of one piece of Lord Callaghan's advice. Yesterday he attended his third meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party in recent weeks and stressed the need for dialogue between ministers, MPs and the party. Until recently Mr Blair had attended the weekly meeting only occasionally.

MPs were promised greater input into the Government's policy-making process yesterday by David Miliband, head of the Downing Street Policy Unit, who spoke at the meeting.



Houdini with Conan Doyle: Their friendship developed into a longstanding feud



Houdini, who published articles exposing psychics, taking part in a seance

Conan Doyle's very suspicious seance

IT WAS the strange and momentous night when Arthur met Harry.

The Arthur was the creator of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Harry was the legendary escapologist, Harry Houdini. They had been brought together by their shared interest in spiritualism. They met on this occasion in a hotel room in Atlantic City.

The curtains were drawn and the ouija board was produced. Conan Doyle's wife, Jean, allegedly a medium, attempted to summon the spirit of Houdini's mother. As the escapologist and writer looked on she said she had succeeded and conveyed to Houdini seasonal Christmas greetings from his departed mum.

The two men rejoiced at the success of the seance. It was only later that Houdini, no doubt inspired by the spirit of Sherlock Holmes, smelled a rat.

As his mother was Jewish, her first words to her son from the other side were unlikely to be Merry Christmas. And as she spoke only Yiddish it was even more unlikely that she and Lady Conan Doyle would be able to have much of a conversation. After that evening in 1922 the relationship between writer and

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

escapologist became increasingly strained, developing into a feud. The feud and Conan Doyle's staunch defence of spiritualism is evident in letters by the author to be auctioned today.

The two men fell out for good when Houdini's repeated failure to reach his mother on the other side led him publicly to denounce mediums and seances as frauds. Conan Doyle remained a firm believer in spiritualism.

Four letters written by Conan Doyle to the American journalist and the psychic investigator, James M Bird, are expected to fetch between £3,000 and £3,500 when they go under the hammer at Sotheby's.

Conan Doyle was an admirer of Bird's investigations, even remarking in one letter with a surprisingly modern colloquialism "Wow! What a life!"

The letters encourage Bird in his "quest upon the greatest of all questions" and congratulate him on his "stand against Houdini", adding that Bird, after his investigations, "cannot have the slightest doubt of the preternatural origin of these phenomena. Nothing is SUPERNATURAL."

He also encouraged Bird in his "quest upon this greatest of all questions - so great that the most powerful argument against it is that its general acceptance would dwarf the affairs of life".

Also for sale at the auction is a pamphlet, *A Word Of Warning*, which Conan Doyle wrote in 1923 saying that the world faced an impending crisis to which he had been alerted through his spirit guide.

Meanwhile, a frustrated Houdini had published a series of articles exposing mediums and psychics as fakes.

Taking issue with one of these, which refers to a photograph of a levitating Chicago medium that Houdini said was false, Conan Doyle wrote: "He told me that he could see the foot of Mrs Tumston in the photo taken with him in Chicago. I should think that the real argument is that where a medium is taking she would take particular notice that her foot was not visible."

Included in the sale is an LP brought out in 1970 of *The Final Houdini Seance*. That seance, which took place on 31 October 1938, involved Houdini's widow attempting to contact her late husband. She failed.

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Pierre Rouve

PIERRE ROUVE was a master of several trades: interpreter, diplomat, art critic, semi-fictional, BBC World Service broadcaster, film producer/director, translator, university lecturer. He arrived in England from his native Bulgaria in 1947, and became well known in various subcultures of his adopted country, depending on which of his many hats he was wearing at any given moment. But in Bulgaria he was a celebrity, and one of its most famous émigrés or exiles, along with his sister Dora Vallier, Julia Kristeva, Tsvetan Todorov and Elias Canetti. On learning of Rouve's death, the President of Bulgaria, Peter Stoyanov, wrote to Rouve's wife and daughter: "Your husband and father will have his place in the history of Bulgaria."

Rouve used to joke that he was a professional Bulgarian, but this was a day-job persona, an image constructed by an exile in the classic mode. Inside Bulgaria his was the voice (literally so, over the air) of freedom, tolerance and democracy, incarnating these eternal values during the darkest days of the Cold War. But this liberal intellectual was never a headline ideologue and after the fall of Communism he called for moderation and tolerance towards individuals associated with the *ancien régime*.

Broadcasting regularly for 50 years as a freelance ("a spiritual ambassador" in the words of Bulgaria's Minister of Culture), he may have had only one long-service peer at the World Service, the far less extrovert but equally intellectual Anatole Goldberg of the Russian Section. They both embodied a public service broadcasting culture whose heyday may, sadly, have passed.

Goldberg, however, unlike Rouve, was primarily a political commentator. One could more appropriately compare Rouve with Alistair Cooke, broadcasting to his home country from abroad, but for obvious reasons Cooke's listeners do not turn

to him for the assertion of fundamental values denied at home.

While Rouve did share something with these two great broadcasters, his famous broadcasts – in which he discussed cultural and social issues, literature and art – were a projection of his own highly individual voice. Like Arthur Koestler and George Steiner he was a grand master of *haute vulgarisation*. From 1968 till 1982 he also broadcast on France-Culture.

What underlay every word Rouve spoke – in private and in public –

was a fox, and a fox knows many things. Thus the self-deprecatory remark about being a draftsman, a practice run, for his equally brilliant sister, raises a big question: was he – in his own eyes although certainly not in the world's eyes – unfulfilled in some way? Answer, of course, comes there none. For he, being himself ("such as into himself at last he is changed"), to adapt Mallarmé, could not help doing many things. It was the nature (for which one can read culture) of the man.

The man was brilliant and charming.

One grouse his friends have against him is that much of his best writing – à la Coleridge and Isaiah Berlin – was spoken. He could compose fully fledged impromptu sentences and paragraphs, at the drop of a hat – or a brandy

were the language, attitude, education and general approach of central European intellectuals, the kind of émigré figures often found in, and perhaps more at home in, Paris or Vienna, Edinburgh or Berlin. In England such figures, especially if their style is perceived as being eloquent in an old-fashioned way, are sometimes dismissed as pseudo-intellectuals – but this term is often enough a synonym for intellectual as such. Rouve himself saw England as the embodiment of civilisation, France as the embodiment of culture. His younger sister, the famous art critic Dora Vallier, lived in France. He always said he was the "brouillon" (draft) for her.

By this I suspect he meant that she was – in Isaiah Berlin's terminology – a hedgehog, who knew one big thing, namely art, and spent her entire life writing major works of art history and criticism. He, by contrast,

ing, seductive and handsome, and in 1962 he met his perfect match, in the beautiful and talented young educationist Sonia Joyce. In his movie incarnation, he directed James Stewart in *Stranger in the House* in 1968, was Antonioni's associate director on *Blow-Up* (1966), and worked with Anatole de Gruy on many films. He directed his close friend Jonathan Griffin's translation of Claudel's *Partage de Midi* at the Ipswich Playhouse in 1972, starring Ben Kingsley and Annie Firbank, who were both far less well known than they are today. London buddies descended in a hired coach. Rouve also directed plays for the legendary Q Theatre at Kew Bridge in the Forties and Fifties.

One grouse his friends have against him is that much of his best writing – à la Coleridge and Isaiah Berlin – was spoken, whether at public meetings, in the club at Bush

House, or hosting boozy smoke-filled dinner parties in his Chelsea house (with pictures by Pollock, Vieira da Silva and Arp on the wall). Like other intellectuals of his ilk, he could compose fully fledged impromptu sentences and paragraphs, at the drop of a hat – or a brandy.

I shall never forget one occasion in King's College London, after someone had given a prepared lecture on some topic or other when Rouve stood up from the floor and made a critique of the lecture which left lesser mortals breathless. Oh, the unwritten books! His studio was in Markham Square, a short drink from his house: Bulgarian plum brandy and fags, books in many languages (he spoke at least six), mementos of theatre and movies, memories and icons (a traditionalist unbeliever, he is being buried according to the Bulgarian Orthodox Christian rite). Rouve belonged to a classically European community of the spirit, and it is good to know that his widow intends this studio to house a foundation which will keep this spirit, his spirit, alive.

A book which was written – in French – was his extraordinarily original study of J.M.W. Turner, *Turner: étude de structures*, published in France in 1980. This text, which avoids the opposing sins of aestheticism and populism, was praised to the sky by such eminent figures as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roman Jakobson ("a daring and powerful attempt to see a painter's development and achievement in the light of sign theory, philosophy, psychology and cultural history") and Jean Starobinski. Rouve also published many shorter texts on art and semiotics, a characteristic title being: "From Optime to Sign Sentence: towards a visual grammar" (1983).

The son of first-generation post-Liberation teachers, Rouve received his early education in an Italian primary school in Sofia and at the Augustinian Fathers' Lycée in Plovdiv – where he received the school prize from Cardinal Roncalli, later



The type of the central European intellectual

Josef Gross

Pope John XXIII – and then attended university in Sofia (studying for an appropriately functional law degree in order to please his widowed mother, although he never became a lawyer) and Rome. He did post-graduate research in Venice and Paris.

During his military service he had the taxing job of interpreter for the army orchestra. From 1938 till 1946 he was a professor at the University of Sofia, and also spent some time as a diplomat. He taught at univer-

sities throughout Europe, as well as in North America and Mexico. He was Vice-President of the International Association of Art Critics and President of the International Jury of the Rijeka Biennale of Drawings.

Perhaps the most famous poem of Wallace Stevens, Rouve's favourite English-language poet, is "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird". Substitute Rouve for blackbird and you have an idea of his manifold nature. Another poem of Stevens, "Notes Toward a Supreme

Fiction", ends with the phrase "he... lives on the head of faithful speech". Faithful speech was Pierre Rouve's sustenance. We can ask no more of a European intellectual or, indeed, of a human being.

ANTHONY RUDOLF

Peter Christoff Ovooliev (Pierre Rouve), art critic, broadcaster and film director; born Sofia 12 January 1915; married 1962 Sonia Joyce (one daughter); died London 11 December 1998.

Helen de Freitas

HELEN DE FREITAS was both a leading member of the American community in London and an outstanding ambassador for Great Britain in Accra, Nairobi and Strasbourg when her late husband, Sir Geoffrey, a former Labour cabinet minister, served as High Commissioner to two newly granted independent Commonwealth countries, and as President of the Council of Europe.

She was the eldest of the four daughters of Laird Bell, a distinguished American attorney who was Chairman of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations. As president of the Alumni Association of Harvard University in June 1947 Laird Bell took the chair for Secretary of State George Marshall when he launched the European Recovery Plan that bears his name. In 1956 he presided over Adlai Stevenson's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Helen Bell grew up in Winnetka, Illinois. In 1936 she graduated from Bryn Mawr, the non-sectarian women's college founded by Quakers in Pennsylvania. She then sailed in the SS *Berengaria* on her way to the Soviet Union to study the Moscow theatre for children. She had herself produced children's plays at the Chicago World's Fair. A friend on the New York quayside managed by gesture to introduce her to Geoffrey de Freitas, another friend, and a fellow passenger. He was returning to Britain to be called to the Bar after a two-year fellowship at Yale.

Previously Geoffrey de Freitas

The Conservative candidate was confident. His Labour opponent, he declared, had a foreign-sounding name. He seemed educated. But he was not a patriot. He had married a foreign wife



had been at Cambridge, where he won many of the glittering prizes. As a freshman he gained a full Blue for high jumping. He was President of the Union, and a leading member of the Hawks Club. His chance encounter with Helen Bell aboard the *Berengaria* was a most happy one. They were married two years later.

They were a handsome couple: he very tall and athletic; she, also tall, a slim brunette, with sparkling brown eyes and a winning smile. Their flat in Great Ormond Street soon became a hospitable meeting place for Geoffrey's Cambridge friends and for fellow barristers. One or two evenings a week Geoffrey attended meetings of the Shoreditch Borough Council. He had been

elected as a Labour member soon after his return to London. Helen found this a useful preparation for the semi-widowhood of being a parliamentary wife.

During the Second World War Squadron Leader de Freitas served in the RAF Equipment Branch. In the summer of 1940 Helen, who was pregnant, returned to America, deeming it wiser, as she said, "to leave the defence of Britain in more active hands". Her daughter was born during the Battle of Britain. The following year she returned to England and worked in the Knarborough General Hospital.

In the 1945 general election de Freitas stood against the sitting Conservative member for Notting-

ham Central, Sir Frederick Sykes. During the three-week hiatus between polling day and the declaration of the result Sykes was confident that he had held his seat. His Labour opponent, he declared, had a foreign-sounding name, but seemed educated. However he was not a proper patriot. He had married a foreign wife.

Sykes's electoral forecast proved wrong, and he was not to know that the foreign wife's father, Laird Bell, would shortly be appointed an honorary KBE, like Douglas Fairbanks Jr, for his outstanding work on behalf of British War Relief.

Clement Attlee, the new Prime Minister, appointed de Freitas, a fellow Haileyburyan, to be his Parliamentary Private Secretary, and the two families became close friends. The Prime Minister became the godfather of Helen's eldest son, who had been born during the three-week electoral hiatus. The christening was celebrated at 10 Downing Street.

For the next six years Helen de Freitas was largely occupied in bringing up her daughter and three sons while her husband steadily climbed the political ladder. Attlee appointed him Under-Secretary for Air and sent him as a delegate to the United Nations Assembly at Lake Success. After Labour won the 1950 general election the Prime Minister offered de Freitas the choice between Minister of State at the Foreign Office or Under-Secretary at the Home Office. Bevin was keen to have him at the FO. Attlee advised him to choose the Home Office so that he could see more of the children. "They

are only young once," the Prime Minister said. "Remember that." De Freitas held a number of frontbench posts in the Attlee government and Helen became a close friend of her husband's secretary in the House of Commons, Betty Boothroyd, at that time a would-be parliamentarian. Much later a private pressure group met regularly in Helen's London flat to campaign for Betty Boothroyd's election as the first woman Speaker.

When Harold Macmillan was Prime Minister many former British Colonies were granted self-government. In 1961 Geoffrey de Freitas was offered the post of High Commissioner of Ghana, formerly the Gold Coast, the first black African country to achieve independence. Four Conservative ex-cabinet ministers had been appointed High Commissioners to ex-colonies liberated under the Wind of Change, but de Freitas was the first to be chosen from the Labour Party.

He welcomed the challenge of having to deal with Kwame Nkrumah, who had been imprisoned by the British and was making somewhat alarming anti-British noises, but he did not want to jeopardise his future with the Labour Party by accepting preferment from the Conservatives. He sought advice from Hugh Gaitskell, the new leader of the Labour Party, who declared it was the most sensible proposal that Macmillan had so far made, and assured de Freitas that it would never be held against him.

Sir Geoffrey – he had been awarded the customary High Commis-

sioner's knighthood – and Lady de Freitas were a great success in Accra, both with the Ghanaians and with the expatriate British community, and after two years de Freitas was asked to move to Nairobi to become the first British Diplomatic Representative to the new Federation of East Africa: Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya.

The proposed East African Federation failed to materialise, but Kenya was granted independence under Jomo Kenyatta. The de Freitas were the first diplomatic representatives accredited to the new Prime Minister. They spent two months in England being reoriented, and Helen took lessons in Swahili. She had already learnt some Twi, the Ashanti language in Ghana. Their immediate task in Nairobi was to shift the British role – and Kenya's perception of the British role – from that of colonial governing power to that of a diplomatic mission. Helen's tact and easy approachability were of great advantage here.

In 1964 Sir Geoffrey received a surprise message from the Labour Party in Kettering. Their Member of Parliament, Dick Mitchison, was going to the Lords and they were without a candidate at the forthcoming general election.

Would he allow his name to go forward for this safe Labour seat? He relinquished his Commonwealth Relations post and was duly selected from a field of 73, and returned to the House of Commons. But Gaitskell, who had warmly endorsed his leaving the House to go to

Ghana, had died the previous year and Harold Wilson, the new Labour leader and now Prime Minister, had no inclination to honour his predecessor's commitment to the former cabinet member.

De Freitas was given no post on the front bench, though he was asked to lead the Labour Party delegation to the assembly of the Council of Europe in 1965 and the following year was elected its President. Helen's fluency in French was greatly appreciated at Strasbourg.

After de Freitas had retired from Parliament, in 1979, he and his wife had more time for travelling, particularly to the United States where two of their children had settled. Helen had always kept her American nationality. As Trustee of Bryn Mawr College she made many visits there, and supported its work with generous donations. She was also an energetic patron of International Social Service, the organisation which was founded to handle the problems of migrants and refugees, which raises money with support from the diplomatic community at its famous Spring Fair, held annually at Kensington Town Hall. She generously used both her time and the fortune she had inherited to support causes on both sides of the Atlantic.

LEONARD MIALL

Helen Graham Bell, public servant; born Chicago, Illinois 16 August 1910; married 1938 Geoffrey de Freitas (KCMG 1961, died 1982; three sons, one daughter); died London 14 December 1998.

Marco Denevi

THE WRITER Marco Denevi was that rarest of creatures: an Argentine who was a master of understatement. Typically, although he won several prestigious literary prizes, and was mentioned as a candidate for the Nobel Prize for Literature, his own definition of his literary ambitions was modest in the extreme: "In these times when people inflict so much pain and suffering on each other, it's enough to make someone a little happier. I have about 5,000 readers, and, if I can make them happy, that's fine by me."

Denevi was born in 1922 in a small town outside the Argentine capital, Buenos Aires. Like many thousands of people, his father had emigrated to Argentina from Europe at the turn of the century. Marco always admired his father's outlook on life, which he once described as follows: he had no relatives or friends in Argentina, but he had a mind of his own, an iron

will, and an incorruptible honesty. All he knew was to work. At the age of 50, not only married to an Argentine woman but with seven children, he decided to retire and live off his investments. He helped the development of a small town near Buenos Aires, and when he died in 1949 he still had no idea what being smart, being a speculator, or taking advantage of people meant.

As with many immigrant families, Denevi's father wanted something better for his children than mere work, so he sent Marco to university to study law. Afterwards Marco took employment as a legal clerk in the Postal Savings Bank, but his real enthusiasm was for writing. By the time he was in his twenties, Argentine society was changing rapidly around him, as the new generations, many of them like him the first born in Argentina, sought political and social values they could believe in.

Denevi began to describe these efforts in short stories and then in novels. His first published novel,

Rosaura a las diez ("Rosaura at Ten in the Morning", 1954), used the police thriller genre to convey these processes at work in society. In 1955, the novel won what was then an important prize in Argentina, the Kraft award, which brought Denevi to the public's attention, and perhaps more importantly gave him an annuity for life, which allowed him to devote himself to writing.

In 1960, Denevi scored another notable triumph when his short story *Ceremonia secreta* was chosen from 3,000 submissions for a prize given by *Life* magazine. Published in English the following year as *Secret Ceremony*, the story was in 1969 made into a rather unfortunate film by Joseph Losey, starring Robert Mitchum and a sleepwalking Liz Taylor. In this as in his other works, ordinary people find themselves lost and bewildered in a world they no longer recognise or can find their place in.

Although the 1960s and 1970s were the time of the "boom" in Latin American literature internationally, Denevi was uninterested in conferences, campaigns or reading tours. He stayed in Buenos Aires, writing more books of short stories and novels: *Un pequeño café* ("A Small Café", 1967), *Manuel de historia* ("History Manual", 1985), *Enciclopedia secreta de una familia argentina* ("Secret Encyclopedia of an Argentine Family", 1986), *El jardín de las delicias* ("Garden of Delights", 1992) *El amor es un pájaro rebelde* ("Love is an Unruly Bird", 1993). His closeness with the milieu in which he had always lived also helped him write several successful plays, including *Expedientes* ("Dossiers"), and *El emperador de la China* ("The Emperor of China").

During these years, Denevi also worked as a journalist. Here too, he was preoccupied above all with the

values – or the lack of them – in Argentine society as it evolved in the second half of this century. In 1990 he was one of the founders of the Citizens' Council, which sought to involve people in constructing a democratic civil society after years of military government and what he saw as the disastrous effects of Perónism.

In the image of his father, Marco Denevi valued honesty, perseverance, and loyalty above all. These are the positive values in his fiction as well, to which he added a sense of irony which he once explained as a way "of disguising the fact that I'm a real softie, someone who is easily moved by other people". A gentle man, who himself moved many others through his writing.

NICK CAISTOR

Marco Denevi, writer; born Saenz Peña, Argentina 12 May 1922; died Buenos Aires 12 December 1998.



Mia Farrow, top, and Elizabeth Taylor in Joseph Losey's 1969 film of Denevi's novel *Secret Ceremony* Ronald Grant Archive

هكذا من الراحل

Norman Fell

THE BOOK *Motion Picture Players' Credits* refers to Norman Fell as 'American character actor, very much on television, often as nonplussed bosses and comedic grumps'. The doddan Fell was born to be a character player, equally effective in both sympathetic and unsympathetic roles. He worked steadily during his near 50-year career in all the entertainment media.

Born in Philadelphia in 1924, the son of a restaurateur, Fell first acted in high-school plays. During the Second World War, he spent three years in the Pacific as a US Air Force tail-gunner. 'I had a lot of time to think in the service,' he recalled. 'I swore that, if I survived, nothing would keep me from an acting career.'

After the war, he studied theatre under the GI Bill, emerging from Temple University, Pennsylvania, with a Bachelor of Arts degree. In New York he met Marlon Brando, then the toast of Broadway in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. On Brando's advice, Fell studied with the noted acting teacher Stella Adler, later enrolling with the Actors' Studio. For more than a year, he commuted daily between his home in Philadelphia and New York. 'I was rejected by casting directors during the day,' he said. 'I attended class in the evening, then rode 90 miles on the train home.'

Finally deciding to make New York his base, Fell toiled as a delivery boy for a soda store, a fast-food counterman and a post office mail-handler before making his professional stage debut in Jacinto Benavente's *Bonds of Interest* (1951). Over the next five years he appeared in more than 150 television shows in New York, including Reginald Rose's original Emmy-winning *Twelve Angry Men* (1954). He returned to the Broadway stage in Paddy Chayefsky's play *The Middle of the Night* (1956), which starred Edward G. Robinson. He also acted in *Ferry Mason*, *The Untouchables* and *Peter Gunn*.

Fell's first Hollywood film was Lewis Milestone's gritty Korean War film *Pork Chop Hill* (1959). He was again used by Milestone in *Ocean's 11* (1960), after which film work suddenly dried up. He was thinking of returning to New York when he was offered the rich comedy role of an amorous telephone repair man in the Debbie Reynolds/Tony Curtis film *The Rat Patrol* (1960). 'It wasn't a big part, but it did a lot for my career, which was in a slump about then,' said Fell. 'It made me a better-known commodity, and bigger and better parts started to come my way.'

One of those parts was a co-starring role in *87th Precinct* (1961), a television series based on the police stories of Ed McBain (the pseudonym of Evan Hunter). Fell played Meyer Meyer, a veteran cop whose wry humour did much to enliven the grim and violent episodes. He was Sergeant Charles Wilentz, another television policeman, in *Dan August* (1970), which starred Burt Reynolds. He and Reynolds became friends and later appeared together in the films *The End* (1978) and *Palmeri* (1981). In *The End*, which Reynolds also directed, Fell played one of his 'comedic grumps' - a doctor who has



Fell in Mel Stuart's 1969 film *If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium*

Ronald Grant Archive

In The End, Fell plays a doctor who tells Burt Reynolds he hasn't long to live. When Reynolds vomits in shock, Fell barks, 'You're not making it easy for me'

to tell Reynolds he hasn't long to live. When Reynolds vomits from the shock of the revelation, Fell barks, 'You're not making it easy for me!'

In 1976 he played the key role of 'Smitty' in Irwin Shaw's star-packed 12-hour television saga *Rich Man, Poor Man*, for which he received an Emmy Award nomination. He won a Golden Globe Award and another Emmy nomination for *Three's Company* (1977), the American version of John Esmonde and Bob Larbey's witty British sitcom *Man About the House* (1973). He played the

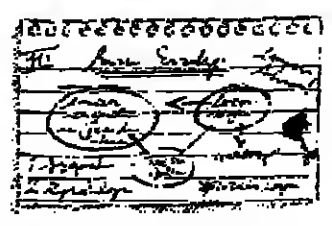
stingy, sex-shy landlord Stanley Roper (George Roper in the British version), with Audra Lindley as his sharp-tongued wife Helen (Mildred in the British version). After two years Fell and Lindley left to co-star in the successful spin-off series *The Ropers*, which was based on Johnnie Mortimer and Brian Cooke's British spin-off *George and Mildred* (1978).

The kind of actor that directors knew they could rely on, Fell was employed by Stanley Kramer in *Inherit the Wind* (1960) and *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad*

World (1963), by Don Siegel in *The Killers* (1964) and *Charley Varlock* (1973), by Delbert Mann in *Quick, Before It Melts* (1965) and *Fitzcarraldo* (1967), by Jack Smight in *The Secret War of Harry Frigg* (1968) and *Airport* 1975 (1974), and by Mike Nichols in *The Graduate* (1967) and *Catch-22* (1970). He also appeared in Leslie H. Martinson's *PT 109* (1963), as a crew member of the torpedo boat commanded by Cliff Robertson as Lieutenant John F. Kennedy; Peter Yates's *Bullitt* (1968, as a cop) the vampire spoof *Transylvania 6-6000* (1968, as a tabloid newspaper editor) and *For the Boys* (1991, as a harassed television producer - yet another of Norman Fell's nonplussed comedic grumps).

DICK VOSBURGH

Norman Fell, actor; born Philadelphia 24 May 1924; married (two daughters); died Los Angeles 14 December 1998.



ART-HISTORICAL NOTES NOURITZA MATOSSIAN

The double life of a 'starving Armenian'

YOU ARE a famous artist whose work is exhibited in some of the finest museums but your name and nationality are invented. Why would you renounce your identity and country?

Manoug Adolian, an obscure 18-year-old Armenian immigrant, arrived in America in 1920. He had grown up in Vaspurakan, the highland plateau of Lake Van with its fine Armenian architecture. As a child who could not find words he drew and painted to gain control over the frightening chaos. He had fought in the historic siege of Van when a handful of Armenians repulsed the Ottoman army. He marched on the long retreat with his mother and sister over 200 miles of parched and rocky mountains to arrive in a cholera-stricken Yerevan. Famine took the lives of a quarter of a million people, including his mother. As a result of forced marches and hutchery ooe and a half million Armenians perished in Ottoman Turkey's 1915 genocide.

The young refugee wanted to put it all behind him but the New World stigmatised him as 'a starving Armenian'. Like many thousands he had to trim his name to fit in. His survival and reason for living was art. Escaping the drudgery of the foundry, he dared to conceive of himself as an artist. Nature's gifts of draughtsmanship, intelligence, emotional depth and fantasy had been nourished by his mother with the mythology, music

and arts of his region. He had an inborn sense of style with which to style himself.

Yet during the act of self-liberation his black angel clung to him. He branded himself with names which had a dark side - Arshile Gorky, Maxim Gorky, his revolutionary hero, had adopted the word 'bitter' as his pen name. 'Arshile' hid the first letters of Adolian's own country and resembled Armenian Christian names. The mythic Achilles with his secret weakness would bedevil his life. Gorky had to brazen out the racism of the Ku Klux Klan and of the Saccho and Vanzetti trial. Immigrant artists felt that they had no right to exist, let alone enter the artistic establishment.

The inexperienced artist took wing as the nephew of a famous writer. He swept through New York in a long wool coat and wide-brimmed hats pronouncing on exhibitions, the latest art news from Paris, the poverty of Social Realism, the urgency to strive for perfection by studying the masters. Torn away from his home and culture, he did not indulge in nostalgia. Instead he became one of the great leaders of the modern movement in America, passionately introducing Cubism. He survived the Depression and painted some of the finest abstract murals in Roosevelt's WPA. He integrated Surrealism into Abstract Expressionism to earn praise from André Breton.

He led a double life, staying in touch with his Armenian family and friends. Even when he married a second time his Bostonian wife was vague about his ancestry and did not know his real name until after his death. Trapped by his false identity after having children of his own, Gorky expressed his Armenian identity through his art. His fine drawing line flew into arabesque like the rainbow edges of Armenian carpets. Robust and complex organic forms nested like stone carvings on churches and crosses. Brilliant colours dazzled with the wealth of medieval Armenian manuscripts and the iridescent light of his lakeside paradise.

The artist even brought his mother back from an unmarked grave by painting her. Today she sits beside him in the National Gallery, Washington DC, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in queenly splendour. Yet the trauma of the genocide finally claimed him. After a series of catastrophes in 1948 he took his own life. Gorky would be amazed to read beside his painting 'Manoug (Vosdanig) Adolian, born in western Armenia'.

He had always planned to reclaim his name once he became famous and proved himself worthy.

Nouritza Matossian is the author of *'Black Angel: a life of Arshile Gorky'* (Chatto & Windus, £25)

Interest calculation to disregard benefits

THURSDAY LAW REPORT 17 DECEMBER 1998

Wadey v Surrey County Council
Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Schiemann)
11 December 1998

WHEN CALCULATING interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in personal injury actions the court should disregard state benefits received by the plaintiff.

The Court of Appeal allowed the plaintiff's cross-appeal in proceedings against the defendants in respect of personal injury, loss and damage suffered as a result of injuries sustained in the course of his employment with the defendants as a fire-fighter.

The plaintiff had been awarded damages in the sum of £224,049.81. The defendants had originally sought to impugn the judge's findings on the issue of liability, but that aspect of the case had been compromised between the parties.

The issue arose on the plaintiff's cross-appeal whether or not interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in an action for personal injuries should be calculated after deduction of all or some of the state benefits received by the plaintiff as a result of the accident.

Included in the plaintiff's award of £224,049.81 was the sum of £49,197.20, representing the benefits he had received over a five-year period. In assessing the interest on special damages those benefits had been deducted before calculation. Had they not been so deducted, the plaintiff's award would have been increased by nearly £10,000.

Edward Bishop (Vicars) for the plaintiff; Charles Pugh (Lawford & Co) for the defendants.

Lord Justice Otton said that section 103 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992

duced by the Social Security Act 1999 of disregarding benefits for the purposes of damages but not interest; or whether the new legislation heralded a new approach to the issue altogether.

The scheme of the Social Security (Recovery of Benefits) Act 1997 was clear and straightforward and led to only one conclusion: in the absence of a provision on interest similar to section 103 of the 1992 Act, coupled with the unambiguous direction in section 17 as to the treatment of benefits in relation to damages, not only should benefits be disregarded from the assessment of damages, but also from the assessment of interest.

The 1997 Act was not intended as a piecemeal amendment to the existing law, but had been redrafted in its entirety, fitting with Parliament's intention of setting up a new scheme. The omission of a provision such as section 103 could not, therefore, have been intentional.

In coming to that conclusion valuable assistance could be drawn from the decision of the Scottish Court of Session (Inner House) in *Wiseley v John Fulton (Plumbers) Ltd* [1998] SLT 1026, in which the court had had to consider exactly the same question as that presently before the court.

Taking into consideration the general principle that on points of statutory construction which extended to both countries, English and Scottish law should be uniform, there was no compelling reason not to adopt the decision arrived at by the Scottish court.

KATE O'HANLON, Barrister

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS
de FREITAS, Helen, peacefully at home on 14 December, aged 84. Beloved wife of the late Geoffrey, dearly loved mother of Frankie, Graham, Roger and Patrick. Funeral service on Monday 21 December, Holy Innocents Church, Paddiswick Road, Hammersmith, London W6, at 2pm. Family flowers only, donations, if desired, to Trees for London, c/o Barnes & Sons, 161 Askew Road, London W12 8AU. A celebration of Helen's life will be held in the spring.

LECTURES
Portrait Gallery: Roger Hargreaves, 'The Make-believe World of Theatre Photographer Angus McBean', 1.10pm.
British Museum: Rowena Loverance, 'Representations of the Christmas Story', 11.30am.

Announcements for BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS
Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam are charged at 55.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notice, functions, Forthcoming marriages, Marriages) are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

BIRTHDAYS
Mr Simon Bates, disc jockey, 51; Professor Mark Casson, economist, 53; Mr Christopher Cazenove, actor, 53; Viscount Davenport, former Lord-Lieutenant of Warwickshire, 77; Lord de Villiers, barrister, 87; Lord Glenamara, former government minister, 86; Mr Brian Hayes, radio presenter, 61; Mr Bernard Hill, actor, 54; The Hon Dominic Lawson, Editor, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 42; Mr Richard Marriott, Lord-Lieutenant for the East Riding of Yorkshire, 68; Mr Kerry Packer, chairman, Consolidated Press Holdings, 61; Sir Leonard Peach, Commissioner for Public Appointments, 66; Mr Robert Robinson, broadcaster and writer, 71; Mr David Smith, former Headmaster, Bradford Grammar School, 64; Mr Tommy Steele, singer and actor, 62; Baroness Strange, writer, 71.

ANNIVERSARIES
Births: Prince Rupert of Bavaria, Royalist commander

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS
The Prince of Wales undertakes engagements in Cardiff. The Princess Royal opens

der, 1619; Gabrielle-Emilie Le Tonnellier de Breteuil, Marquise du Chateau, writer, 1706; Ludwig van Beethoven, composer baptised 1770. Sir Humphry Davy, chemist and inventor, 1778; Sir George Hayter, painter, 1792; Jules Alfred Huot de Goncourt, novelist and historian, 1830; Ford Madox Ford (Ford Hermann Hueffer), novelist, 1873; J. Robertson Hare, actor, 1891; Erskine Preston Caldwell, novelist, 1903; Walter Greenwood, novelist and playwright, 1903; Stanley Raymond (Ray) Noble, composer and conductor, 1903; Willard Frank Libby, chemist, 1908.

Deaths: Pope Gregory VIII, 1187; Sir William Gascoigne, Lord Chief Justice, 1413; Thomas Guy, bookseller and philanthropist, 1724; Simon Bolivar, South American patriot, 1830; Kaspar Hauser, the founding 'wild boy' of Nuremberg, 1833; Rear-Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort, hydrographer, 1857; Louis-Marie Alphonse Daudet, novelist, 1897; Baron Ferdinand James de Rothschild, banker, 1898; Bernard Quaritch, bookseller, 1899; Sir William Thomson, first

Baron Kelvin of Largs, physicist, 1907; Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, physician, 1917; Peter Philip Heseltine Warlock, composer and editor, committed suicide 1930; Robert Malise Bowyer Nichols, poet, 1944; Sir Bernard Henry Spilshury, pathologist, 1947; Harold Edward Holt, statesman, drowned 1967; Dana Andrews (Carver Daniel Andrews), actor, 1992.

On this day: Drake's ship *The Pelican* (afterwards called *The Golden Hind*) sailed out of Plymouth on a round-the-world voyage, 1577; Simon Bolivar became president of Colombia, 1819; the Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, opened, 1888; the first radio message was sent across the Atlantic, 1902; the Wright brothers made their first flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, 1903; a protectorate over Egypt was proclaimed by Britain, 1914; following a blizzard, New York received 27 inches of snow, 1947; due to the closing of the Suez Canal, petrol rationing was imposed in Britain, 1956; after Arab guerrillas hijacked a West German

airliner at Rome airport, 31 people were killed, 1973.

Today is the Feast Day of St Begga, St Lazarus, St Olympias, St Sturm and St Wivina.

RECEPTIONS
British Safety Council
Sir Neville Purvis, Director-General of the British Safety Council, hosted a reception yesterday at the Armourers' Hall, London EC2, for the Council's Diploma in Safety Management and Diploma in Environment Management.

DINNERS
Society of Chemical Industry
The 1998 Messel Medal of the Society of Chemical Industry was presented to Professor Jean Marie Lehn at a dinner held yesterday evening at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He spoke on 'Supramolecular Chemistry: concepts and perspectives'. Mr Raymond Holland, Chairman of Council, and Mr Richard Denyer, General Secretary, also attended.

the first phase of the Oxfordshire Museum project, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, and visits an exhibition to mark the bicentenary of the Oxfordshire Yeomanry, and, as Patron, the Home Farm Trust, attends

The Coming of Christmas at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford. The Duke of Gloucester attends the opening night of the International Show Jumping Championships at Olympia, London W14.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

'YOU MUST must remember zis, / A kiss is just a kiss, / A fly is just a fly,' doodles John Lennon on *Anthology*. His penchant for pun and wordplay makes one wonder what he could have done with osculation in popular song. From the Latin for kiss, it might sound technical - passion enacted upon a micro-

WORDS
CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE
osculation, n.
scope slide - and there are indeed zoological usages. As for a meeting of the lips, the OED would have us believe that it petered out

in the 19th century (Thackeray was fond of it), but it overlooks the most famous 20th-century instance: in *Ulysses*, when Blinm 'kissed the plump mellow yellow melons of her rump, on each plump melonous hemisphere, in their mellow yellow furrow, with obscure prolonged provocative melonmellonous osculation'.

DILEMMAS
WITH VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

Is it foolish to buy our son a flat?

Angela's son has just graduated and although he's working he can't get a mortgage. Angela and her husband have the money to help but are not sure what they should do. His mother wants to buy him a flat outright; her husband thinks they should only pay for part of it. Angela's parents say he should manage on his own like they did. What should they do?

VIRGINIA'S ADVICE

What Angela's parents don't realise is that it just isn't as easy now to get a foothold on the property ladder. When they were young it was simple to rent a flat, let out part of it, and save for the down payment on a house. Admittedly my salary was then something like £35 a week, but in the Sixties I rented a huge flat in Chelsea for two quid a week, and within two years had bought an enormous flat in Holland Park for £5,000 with no help from anybody except a mortgage company. I don't call that coming up the hard way. I call it dead easy. In the Forties, when Angela's parents were setting out in life, presumably it was even easier. Today, to afford the tiniest little box in Walthamstow you need to have two salaries, or work 10 hours a day in the City and at weekends.

When I was discussing this dilemma with friends, there was a great deal of talk - mainly from men - about needing to instil in children the knowledge of "the value of money". I know what they mean, and I imagine that's how Angela's husband feels, but it does rather assume that he believes his son is a squanderer. I should think that, after being a student for three years, he certainly knows "the value of money". And does Angela's husband want their son to spend his life slaving away to pay off a debt to his parents, who will, presumably, be acting as a kind of mortgage company, just in the pursuit of cash? Might his father not be

teaching his son to over-value money? By giving him a flat, might they not be giving the young man a chance to learn, sooner rather than later, that money and possessions aren't everything in life? Even if they buy him the flat outright, he still has to earn a living of some sort. He has to eat, buy clothes and pay his council tax. Just because he has a flat doesn't mean he's able to loaf around taking things easy. It's not as if they are offering him a private income. Even then, though a private income can be de-

structive for a lazy or unconfident child, it can be a great release for a creative one. Many artists, poets and authors have had small private means; how else would they have survived? There is an argument, however, that to hold a little bit of the money back, say £10,000, and let him pay it back to his parents, might be good for the son, so that, when he has paid off the debt, he will feel it is indeed "his" flat, which in some way he has earned. If paying back a small bit of the cash would make

the son feel better about himself, then obviously that's how the matter should be handled. But the son should be in on all the discussions about this. I think my own advice would be to buy him the flat outright, unless he wants to pay back a bit on his own. It will give him a chance perhaps to work at something he really wants to do, rather than have to spend years in a job he may hate or be unsuited to, just for the cash. And in the end, he will get all their money anyway, so why not give him some of it now?

Ask him to pay some of it back. Your son's sense of self-worth and self-respect are on the line here. As parents, we think we can make our children happy with a present. But in this situation it would be treating him like a child and not encouraging him to be independent, which, after all, is the main aim of good parenting. Put down a sum on the flat and get your son to pay back the rest. JAN HAWKES Lichfield, Staffordshire

READERS' SUGGESTIONS

The son's turn will come. If Angela's parents are critical of her generosity and feel that her son should "work his way up," perhaps she should gently remind them that her son's generation will have to pay for the upkeep of its elderly people, who are living much longer than their forebears did. JILL WILLIAMS Knebworth, Hertfordshire

Lend him the money at low interest. When three of our children were in their twenties, we had similar but threefold situations to the one described in your column this week. Our solution, which out of fairness had to be available to all three, was as follows. Any capital element involved was paid out in equal shares, whether there was a request for help or not. Any money on loan was the subject of a formal loan agreement, the rate of interest being paid being the current Building Society Savers' rate, less the basic rate of income tax.

Applying this system to your specific dilemma, your reader should loan the mortgage needed at the rate of interest described above. The son

gets the mortgage he wants at a lower cost than he would pay in the high street, the grandparents should be satisfied since he would be paying his way, and the parents have the benefit of not losing any interest on their "loan capital." This system seemed to work well in our family. TONY AND CARMEL ROGERS Cambridge

Buy him the flat outright. Why wait until you're dead for your son to inherit your money when he's well-off and has no need for it? Either buy him the flat outright or allow him to pay back part of it. Whatever you do, don't let him struggle along unaided. Your parents are wrong - there is no moral or material benefit in living miserably on a pittance if his family can afford to help him. It will not make him lazy or profligate, if our experience is anything to go by. LINDA WILLIAMS St Margaret's Bay, Dover

My parents did the right thing. I am 53, disabled (I have cerebral palsy) so I do everything with my feet, including writing this! and I work for

a bank. In 1990 I felt the time had come to "fly the coop" - not easy when you have a physical impairment, but my parents had always been supportive of my independence and were pleased to see me making the effort. After all, many disabled people opt to stay at home and realise the shock of reality only when their parents pass on. I found a bungalow, but because I couldn't afford the mortgage I drove home in a depressed state. I told my

parents, and thought, "Well, that's blown that". Half an hour later they called me into the living-room and asked if they could lend me £20,000 towards the purchase, on the understanding that it would be paid back over, say, the next 20 years. Through my parents' generosity I was able to set up my own place, while still feeling that I wasn't being given a "free lunch". ROB WILLIAMS Knutsford, Cheshire

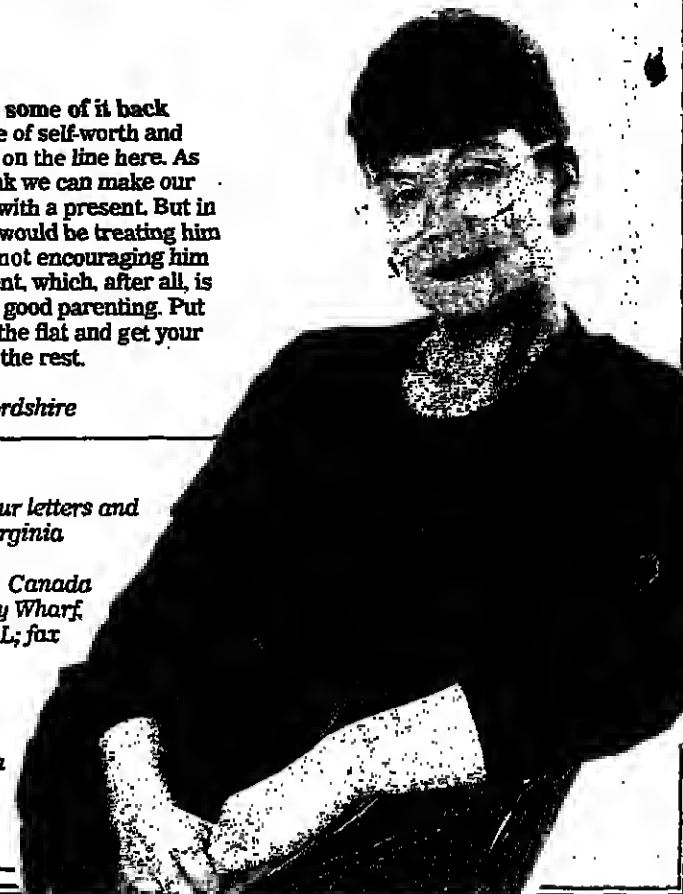
make me painfully aware that I'm a 35-year-old singleton. Increasingly, I dread going, and feel upset for days afterwards. I have a stressful job and the idea of spending the day on my own and having a drink with friends appeals to me more and more. I know my mother would be upset, but would it be very selfish to pretend to be ill? Yours sincerely, Geraldine

NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

Dear Virginia, I have been asked, as usual, to spend Christmas with my mother, stepfather, brother, his wife and children, and several other relations. Part of the problem is my stepfather, who, in my view, treats my mother very badly. He bullies her mercilessly - and expects Christmas to be done 'his way', rather than as it was when my father was alive. I have to say that my mother doesn't seem to mind all this. Also, my nieces and nephews

Please send your letters and dilemmas to Virginia Ironside, "The Independent", 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL; fax 0171-293 2182; e-mail dilemmas@independent.co.uk - giving a postal address for sending the bouquet

Anyone who has advice quoted will be sent a bouquet from "Incerflora"



My son at the cutting edge

There were tears and tantrums the day Jack Shamash had his baby son circumcised. They mostly came from his wife

THE CEREMONY was easy for me. But for my wife, it was a little harder. She went upstairs with a couple of friends, got quite drunk and wept buckets.

Five months ago my wife gave birth to a son, and we decided to have him circumcised. It was not a straightforward decision. Over the past few years, circumcisions have come to be seen as almost bestial. Campaigners against circumcision - and there are many - lament the barbarity, the trauma to the child, the loss of sexual pleasure for the adult and the lasting physical and psychological wounds.

The best-selling guide to childcare, *Your Baby and Child* by Penelope Leach, claims that some babies go into shock during circumcision, and that the procedure leaves some men with a life-long sense of being deformed. She says: "There is no possible good to balance out the probable harm."

I decided to disregard this advice and go ahead with a circumcision - not just because I'm an unfeeling brute, but because we're Jewish and that's what Jews do. And also because - to be honest - I think uncircumcised penises look funny, and I don't really want my son to look different from me.

Jewish circumcisions are done by mohels (special circumcisers), most of whom have no formal medical training. Jewish boys are usually circumcised at the age of eight days, so after the birth we had to work quickly. A friend of ours who had recently had a son recommended a mohel from Stamford Hill in north London - an area which has become almost a Chasidic ghetto - so we called him.

The following day, a large Renault Espace pulled up outside our door. Out stepped two fat men with long beards and forelocks. They wore formal garb. Black silk kaftans belted



A mohel prepares to circumcise a new-born baby - wine is administered as an anaesthetic

Alain Bizio/Contact Press Images

around the waist, white stockings and polished black slippers. On their heads were the large, fur hats known as *shtreimls*. They looked as if they'd come straight out of central casting.

The older rabbi was called Rabbi Ashkenazy - it seemed an impertinence to ask his first name. My wife asked whether the baby would suffer any pain. The rabbi dismissed this suggestion contemptuously. He seemed to imply that there was nothing a Jewish boy liked better than to have the end of his penis hacked with a blade.

He said the only problem was that the mothers often became agitated, and this could communicate itself to the child. "I tell you this," he said. "When I hand him back, he will be completely bappy and peaceful."

The rabbi gave us his card - on the back of which was a shopping list of things we had to provide for the operation. They included a sterile dressing-pack, six packs of gauze

swabs, five disposable nappies, cotton wool, a pillow, two prayer shawls, a bottle of Kedem Traditional Kiddush wine and an unopened bottle of olive oil. We also bought a tube of anaesthetic cream - although the rabbi told us it would have no effect.

The day of the circumcision arrived. For Jews, circumcisions usually involve a party - a bit like weddings or bar mitzvahs. I can't say I enjoyed this one very much.

The circumcision was held at my mum's house, which was packed with guests. We were late. My wife, Carol, dashed upstairs, and drank a large glass of whiskey - partly to calm her nerves and partly so that the alcohol in her milk would subdue the baby. She was too upset to face the crowd.

Half an hour later, the rabbi arrived with his assistant. They set up shop on a small card-table, bringing out bandages, surgical clips and beakers, as if they were about to perform a bloodthirsty conjuring trick.

I brought the baby downstairs. It is regarded as a blessing to help carry the baby to the circumcision, so he was passed through the crowd from hand to hand.

During the operation, it is traditional for the baby to be held by his Godfather. We had picked my wife's cousin Graham for this job. Unfortunately Graham faints at the sight of blood. The rabbi assured Graham that he would be fine, so Graham sat there with a fixed smile on his face, imagining he was somewhere else.

The rabbi asked me what name I'd chosen for the baby. I told him we were calling him Nathan, which in Hebrew means "given". And then the rabbi called for bush and started chanting. As the rabbi recited the prayers, he grasped a clip from among the tools on the card-table and put it over the baby's foreskin, pulled it forward and, with a yank of his knife, the foreskin came off in one clean movement. The baby cried, blood flowed on to his penis and - as

the rabbi had predicted - Graham did not faint. The rabbi then bent over the baby and sucked the wound. I know this sounds awful, but it is part of the Jewish tradition. It's supposed to help the healing. He then gave the baby a few drops of kosher wine as a primitive anaesthetic.

The rabbi had lied to us. The baby was not at all happy and peaceful after the operation. He was in a horrible mood and whined intermittently for the next day or so. It was tricky changing his nappy - we used two nappies at a time to ensure that the wound wasn't disturbed. After a week, we were allowed to bathe the baby and the dressing floated off. His penis looked rather as one might have expected a bloody mess. Over the next few days, the bruising went down and the penis began to look like a purple acorn.

Do I have any regrets? None at all. Nathan is a happy, lively boy. And his penis? It's delightful - just like his dad's.

POETIC LICENCE

THE EFFICIENCY SQUAD

BY MARTIN NEWELL

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL HEATH

The Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, is to establish an Efficiency Squad to monitor the arts across the nation. The new unit, Quest, (Quality, Efficiency and Standards Team) will be made up of six civil servants reporting to Mr Smith from museums, galleries and theatres.



No one expects the Efficiency Squad
They answer to themselves and God
And plan their raids on certain days
Descending on provincial plays,
Museums, readings, galleries
And various ballet companies

Their faces veiled by opera masks
They grimly set about their tasks
Abseiling down from colonnades
With sun grenades in funding aids
The three-year plans in structured bands
Held tightly in their black-gloved hands

A spot inspection, back of shop
Which gets an ASM the chop
May reassign him from *Der Ring*
To front-of-house in Burger King
Where Brunhild slices onions thin
And Siegfried pops the burgers in

No one expects the Efficiency Squad
The mailed fist, the iron rod
A squeal of brakes, the slam of doors
The troop of boots on polished floors
Museum directors dragged from beds
To conjure figures from their heads

As orchestras vacate M pits
With marching orders in their mitts
A lone arranger goes through hell
While trying to cope with William Tell
His target budget pencilled in
For triangle and violin

And art does not lie easily
When bedded with efficiency
As witnessed very recently
With OUP sans poetry
As subtle as a brickie's hod
No one expects the Efficiency Squad

The sonic saboteur

John Cale is one of music's great pioneers. Punk prototype, avant-garde composer, seminal producer – the founder member of the Velvet Underground has done it all. And he's not finished yet. By John L Walters

One of the great forgotten moments in rock'n'roll history is John Cale's 1975 version of "Heartbreak Hotel". This terrifying re-invention of the Axton/Durden/Presley classic, made almost two decades after Elvis's era-defining original, focuses on the decadent, self-destructive nature of rock, glances back at the music's brief innocence, and anticipates the useless excitement of cover versions, recycling and insignificant posturing that was yet to come. Rock is dying, you feel, and John Cale is one of its most skilled embalmers.

Some figures become so big, so influential, and so legendary that they cannot possibly live up to their reputation. In pop and rock music, David Bowie is one example. Phil Spector another. While ordinary musicians and producers can just get on with their lives, the legends are constantly competing with increasingly fictional versions of their earlier selves. Cale is something in between.

First came up against the demigod of Cale when producing a band who wanted "the sound of the first Velvet Underground and Nico album" – the one with the banana cover and Andy Warhol production credit. The first Velvets album was born of the volatile partnership of the musicianly, avant-garde Cale and the paranoid songsmith Lou Reed, but the sound seems to have been produced by default: a schizophrenic hotch-potch of styles, from the focused intensity of "Venus in Furs", through the scrappy, psychodelic boogie of "Run, Run, Run", to the screaming angst of "Heroin".

That album was a commercial flop, but its badly recorded, drone-laden incoherence has influenced and inspired dozens of terrible bands (and a few good ones). Nico's artless vocals grace a handful of tracks. Listening to songs such as "All Tomorrow's Parties", after reading something of Nico's wretched life and death in James Young's *Nico: songs they never play on the radio*, is a heart-breaking experience that transcends the limitations of the recording. You know it wasn't worth it.

Ever since Cale's rapid departure from the Velvet Underground after Lou Reed issued a "me or him" ultimatum, his musical life has been one of great competence, with the prolific output of a professional who can make something of almost any situation. This has led him through a series of musical adventures, longer and more varied than most of rock's itinerant producer-performers, with the possible exception of Todd Rundgren. Yet when Rundgren produced Meatloaf's *Bad Out of Hell*, Cale produced Pat Metheny's *Horses*, keeping critics busy scribbling for years.

Cale had an effective and affecting musical partnership with Nico, whose Cale-produced albums created – as fellow Cale-influenced producer Brian Eno points out in a BBC Wales documentary – an almost entirely separate genre: "a weird little oasis that they invented."

Whether you think that punk was the musical equivalent of Bauhaus, or just another way of



'I generally don't look back fondly at the things I've done,' says Cale. 'I still don't see a body of work that's coherent'

playing rock'n'roll badly (or both), you can't deny Cale's direct and indirect influence, inspiring punk and gloomy post-punk indie bands by the Ford Transit-load. And conceptually speaking, Cale was often there first. "Heartbreak Hotel" (which includes Chris Spedding, the ex-Nucleus guitarist who produced the Sex Pistols' first demo) makes the Sid Vicious version of "My Way" sound feeble.

During the late Seventies, Cale made several on-stage bids for punk immortality with outbreaks of Herman Nitsch-like excess, such as in Croydon chopping up a chicken with a cleaver. Despite all this, you feel that Gavin Turk, known for his waxwork of Vicious imitating Warhol's Elvis, is not going to follow up with a sculpture of Cale.

Maybe Cale's monument will be the autobiographical *What's the Welsh for Zen*, illustrated and designed by Dave McKean and co-written by Cale and Victor Bockris – to be published by Bloomsbury on 14 January. Adrift in the Brecon Beacons, Bockris follows the Cale trail, looking in awe at houses and chapels and old neighbours as if

their grey Welshness will reveal some great truth about the Sixties New York underground. A local farmer is only vaguely aware of his former playmate's career: "I heard he was involved with a fellow called Andy Warhol who used to do all sorts of weird things and made a lot of money out of it."

John Cale makes a couple of walk-on appearances in the aforementioned James Young book about Nico. First we meet him as an overweight, coke-snorting record producer who (unlike everyone else in the book) has something resem-

bling a career. Cale arrives, makes Nico's last album, *Camera Obscura*, and splits. After a couple of years, and a few more chapters, Cale reappears like the prodigal guest in a junkie soap opera, as a fit, abstemious and squash-playing solo performer, lecturing Nico's band about the evils of smoking and drinking on their Japanese tour.

The Cale story begins with a studious childhood in Garnant, Wales, where he was born on 9 March, 1942. His miner father and schoolteacher mother impressed upon him the importance of study, diligence and

hard work, and his musical studies on piano, organ and viola took him first to Goldsmith's, in south London, and then – after a spate of letter-writing to famous composers – to New York.

In September 1963, Cale was one of 18 pianists who worked in shifts to perform the world premiere of Eric Satie's *Vexations*, an unsettling piano fragment that fits on a single sheet of manuscript with the composer's instructions: "to be played 840 times." It was organised by the composer John Cage and the other pianists included Philip Corner, James Tenney and David del Tredici, but it was a picture of Cage and the young Cale, in suit, tie and shades, that made the *New York Times*. Soon, Cale was part of LaMonte Young's obscure, but influential, Theatre of Eternal Music, which led to Lou Reed, Warhol, and eventually, commercial success.

In recent years, the lean, clean, hudget-conscious Cale has had a greater involvement with the avant-garde milieu of his Sixties self, producing live scores to accompany the Warhol "one-shot" movies, *Eat and Kiss*, and developing a new multimedia work called *Life Underwater*. He has just released a "classical" CD entitled *Dance Music*, which is a 12-movement score commissioned by Scapino Rotterdam for Nico, a ballet choreographed by Ed Wubbe.

The *Nico* score is a surprise. With a superb performance from the Dutch ensemble Ice Nine, the work has an appealing mixture of maturity and freshness in the way it combines strings and rock instruments, particularly the outstanding guitar of Corrie van Binsbergen. In the slow "Art Sleepy Too", the samples of Nico's pleading voice saying "Please, come over here" or "Oh, is that it?" sound moving rather than tacky or exploitative.

The forthcoming outbreak of gentle Cale-mania includes a trio performance at the Royal Festival Hall in January. Despite the fact that he is more celebrated – and in demand – as a producer than as a performer, he has churned out more than a dozen solo albums, building up a vast catalogue of songs that he is happy to play solo (accompanied by piano or guitar) or with a small team of sympathetic musicians, such as multi-instrumentalists Lance Doss and Mark Delfenbaugh, who accompany him next month. Island records is releasing *Close Watch: An Introduction to John Cale*, in January, and Yellow Moon/Diesel Motor is reissuing the 1979 *Sabotage Live*.

In the BBC film, Cale expresses doubts about the value of his work: "I generally don't look fondly back at the things that I've done. I still don't see a body of work that's coherent, maybe I never will, but it's a good motivator because it reminds me of all the things I haven't done."

The ballet score shows Cale's dilemma: capable of renewing himself as a composer, he is still trapped by the fading glamour of Sixties Warhol Factory nostalgia. Despite that, he has done more than most viola players – and record producers – dream of.

John Cale, 11.30pm, BBC2 tomorrow; *John Cale's trio play the RFFH*, London on 21 January 1999 (booking: 0171-960 4242)

Rough and ready

CLASSICAL

CHARLES ROSEN/
PETER KATIN
WIGMORE HALL, LONDON

A BROKEN finger is as good a reason as any for cancelling a piano recital. Last Friday, Charles Rosen (who just happened to be in town) stepped into the breach left by the incapacitated Alfredo Perl for the BBC lunch-time recital, substituting his own choice of works by Beethoven: four of the Op 119 Bagatelles, followed by the "Appassionata" and Op 110 sonatas.

Rosen is one of the most brilliant writers about music today. He is, you might say, in a class of his own. As a pianist he is probably one of that breed who are too clever for their own good. He could probably play most of the standard repertoire by heart, short notice or not. But that does not make him an artist, and if he resents not being as highly esteemed in that capacity as for his writing, there are good reasons, as Friday's shabby recital made clear.

The outer movements of the "Appassionata" were rhythmically insecure and very roughly played, declining, in their most stressful moments, into a panicky fudge. The middle movement was plain and unlovely, to be endured rather than enjoyed. Indeed, Rosen himself didn't seem to be enjoying himself, nor did he take much interest in the sort of sound he was making, or in anything that ordinary, less intellectually gifted mortals might identify as feeling.

He played the sublime A flat major sonata, Op 110, as if it were merely a mechanical construction. The only interesting point was some unusual balancing in the first fugue. Otherwise, Rosen's performance was routine, and barely that.

On Sunday afternoon, Peter Katin celebrated 50 years to the day since his Wigmore recital debut with an attractively varied programme ranging from Scarlatti to Debussy and Rachmaninov. To begin, in three of Scarlatti's best-known sonatas, you might have put Katin's limited sense of adventure down to deference to the music's origins on an 18th-century harpsichord. By the end of Mozart's C minor Fantasy and Sonata, his small dynamic range and limp rhythm seemed merely tired.

After the interval, three of Rachmaninov's Preludes were under-projected, like paintings that lacked the finishing touches to give them life and presence. Debussy's *Reflets dans l'eau* was played, not like the great lonesome poem it is, but as a hurrying salon item for people to talk over. Even Chopin's most relaxed Ballade, the third, needed firmer rhythmic support and, towards the end, more passionate attack in the right hand. And in the A flat Polonaise, the proud Polish cavalry seemed to have been reduced to a modest trot.

There is a repeat broadcast of Charles Rosen's recital on 19 December at 1pm on Radio 3. ADRIAN JACK

NOT BAD FOR A VIOLA PLAYER: JOHN CALE IN RETROSPECT

The Velvet Underground and Nico (1967, Verve)
It may sound like a bunch of badly-recorded demos, but tracks such as "Heroin" and "Venus in Furs" provided the sonic blueprint for generations of manic-depressive non-musicians.

White Light/White Heat (1968, Verve)
Lou Reed's frantic voice dominates this Nico-less second album, which features "Sister Ray" and "The Gift".



Fear (1974, Island)
Features "Fear is a Man's Best friend" and "Mommama Scuba", in which he first tried

out the riff that would later drive "Heartbreak Hotel".

Slow Dazzle (1975, Island)
A confident production, showing a maturing songwriting and arranging style. Features "Heartbreak Hotel" and "Mr Wilson" (Beach Boy Brian, rather than Harold).

Fragments of a Rainy Season (1992, Hannibal)
Introductory versions of Cale's back catalogue, accompanied solely by piano or guitar.

Eat/Kiss: Music for the films of Andy Warhol (1997, Hannibal)
Variable collection of soundscapes, alternately beautiful and dumb.

Dance Music (1998, Detour)
The ballet score to Nico, performed by Ice Nine.

Close Watch: An Introduction to John Cale (January 1999)
Not exactly the "greatest hits", but a useful way to pinpoint the occasional brilliance.

It'll all end in tirades

TO SAY that Ian McKellen was born to play the leading role in Noël Coward's *Present Laughter* may sound a bit of a backhanded compliment. For Garry Essendine, the self-dramatising, ageing matinee idol and Coward alter ego, is unscrupulous double standards in a dressing gown. Protected from reality by an adoring and long-suffering entourage, he comes to feel that this cosy coterie is about to be split apart by predatory female sexuality.

It's telling that the woman who poses this threat is described as being "100 per cent female", as though this were self-evidently a major handicap to virtue. Odd, given that promiscuous impulses aren't thought to detract from Essendine's own charm. A wee touch of misogyny there, perhaps, in this insufficiently heterosexualised comedy *a l'écrit*.

What removes my opening remark from the risk of a libel action is the fact that Garry has also to reek of the flamboyant natural authority that keeps the satellites spinning obediently round him, even when his weaknesses are an open book to them. If you can't establish that compelling sense of ego, then you are unable to convey the essential joke of the piece, which is that this arch control-freak farcically loses control during the play.

THEATRE PRESENT LAUGHTER WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE, LEEDS

This is when McKellen comes up trumps. When Peter Bowles played the role recently, he projected all the self-involvement and queeny excitability of a Desmond Lynam, but he was driven-ness itself compared to Tom Conti's doily narcissistic Garry a couple of years earlier.

By contrast, McKellen delivers a performance of hilariously combustible energy and unpredictable comic timing. "Don't be theatrical," he barks at one of his associates, throwing his arms up in a pose that would not disgrace the hammiest of Fascist dictators. You can always sense that he's a two-tirades-before-breakfast merchant.

McKellen captures Garry wonderfully well, whether assuming a martyr's mask at moments of *l'es-majesté*, or melodramatically clutching his heart as though it were being cruelly pecked at, and ungratefully declaring that his devoted slaves are vultures.

Ever the pampered favourite child, he eats marmalade straight from the dish and wheedlingly nuzzles his estranged wife (a warmly actressy Clare Higgins)



Stellar performance: Ian McKellen as Garry Essendine

until she gives him his holiday present. A man to whom the stage matters more than the heart, he can be slapped in the face by an irate cast-off one moment and then return to discussing contracts the next, in that mother-knows-best manner that the master patented. At the start of the second act, McKellen croons a snatch of one of Coward's most self-revealing songs, "I Travel Alone", its sentiment drooly undercut here because, as soon as the doorbell goes, Garry instinctively starts arranging his hair

in the mirror. But, then, Coward's hero is not essentially lonely; he's essentially empty.

After a nightmare rail journey to Leeds, I arrived at Malcolm Sutherland's unevenly cast production in a state of gibbering misanthropy. It says a lot for McKellen's stellar performance that it swiftly restored me to my usual golden good nature.

A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper. Booking: 0113-213 7700. PAUL TAYLOR

She knows a good 'un when she sees him

THE HERO of Peter Darrell's ballet *Cinderella* is the quiet, gentle Prince Ramiro, who is more interested in books than court occasions; you could almost imagine him talking to the plants in the palace gardens which form a major part of John Fraser's gorgeously pretty designs. A fortuitously appearing good fairy persuades him to exchange disguises for a masked ball with his more flighty quarry Dandini, which fools everyone except Cinders. She knows a good man when she sees one, and deservedly gets him in the end.

Making the ballet, nearly 20 years ago, Darrell and his musical collaborator Bramwell Tovey took some of their inspiration from Rossini's opera *La Cenerentola*, the rest from other versions of the story and other Rossini music (opera ballets and late piano pieces). This welcome revival by Scottish Ballet shows again how well they succeeded in blending fairytale magic, traditional fun and real-life romance.

The comedy is lightly handled; no ugly sisters here but a handsome though nasty pair of stepsisters. And Cinderella, although put upon by her family, is no drudge but a

DANCE

CINDERELLA
FESTIVAL THEATRE
EDINBURGH

pretty girl who gets her own invitation to the ball and then sees it torn up by stepmother, who thinks her not grand enough. What this *Cinderella* has, more than any other version, is a stream of vivid, attractive, expressive and virtuosic dances that tax the dancers but also show them off beautifully.

Darrell had a brilliant gift for story-telling, and each dance episode pushes the plot along while also throwing light on the characters. Like another of his ballets that was revived earlier this year, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, the work suits Scottish Ballet's dancers well and gives them a big, classic show that is uniquely theirs.

It is incredible to think that the company was threatened with closure not much more than a year ago. It looks in good shape, and from the strong first-night cast nobody would have guessed that two principal dancers had to drop out through injury only days earlier

(they are expected back soon). Yurie Shinohara shows a sweet, touching sincerity as Cinderella, her dancing always shiny bright, and delightfully grand in the big final duet, where Campbell McKenzie's partnering makes the most startling lifts look easy. Campbell subdues his naturally big, assertive personality in the Ramiro role, but loses no edge from his strong dance exuberance, which is well matched by Yi-Lei Cai's swift, smiling agility as Dandini.

Anne Christie, Elspeth Shaw and Linda Facker get a lot of fun out of Cinderella's monstrous step-family. And, as always, Darrell's choreography makes much of the whole supporting company, who somehow convey the impression of an enormous cast as they fill the stage with wide-ranging corps de ballet numbers or a dazzling sextet dressed as exotic birds to entertain the guests at the ball. Whoever takes over shortly as Scottish Ballet's new artistic director has a fine base to build on, both in repertory and in artists.

JOHN PERCIVAL

Booking 0131-529 6000; 21-24 Dec

FILM

Bite. Chew. Swallow. Gulp!

Film critics see themselves as... well, how do they see themselves? As harbingers of the truth? As Freudian analysts? As directors in waiting? In the fifth part of our week-long series on criticism, we explore their dark and lonely world. By Adam Mars-Jones

The sheer newness of film means that it has been absorbed by different cultures in different ways, sending down its deepest roots in America, the country with the shortest history. In France, for instance, they do things differently: film is accorded parity with the other art forms by the invention of an extra protective muse, the 10th, and writing about cinema fits into a dense pre-existing dialogue of philosophy and rhetoric. If you read an article that asserts, with a sort of reductive bravado, that Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* is less a film than a deconstruction of Jack Nicholson's smile, you are likely to be reading French criticism.

The British approach to films has tended to be coolly literary, favouring script and performances at the expense of the other things a film contains. In this, our criticism has paralleled our film-making (with reg-

THE CRITICAL
CONDITION

ular exceptions, such as Hitchcock and Lean), though we can more confidently claim to have the virtues that correspond to our vices. The tone of British cinema criticism has generally been polite rather than impassioned, balanced rather than partisan; when the late Dilys Powell, whose reviewing career spanned well over half a century, wrote about films, her readers were not bombarded with her opinions, but could be quite clear about whether she liked a film, or merely admired it. She didn't need to raise her voice.

Criticism has always itself been criticised, as being essentially an act of revenge by the uncreative on the creative – a seductive argument that is refuted by the history of New Wave Cinema in France in the Fifties. A whole generation of critics, spearheaded by Truffaut and Godard, stormed the imaginary barricades and became film-makers in their own right. A sniping opposition became a radical government almost overnight. A colony of parasites declared its independence.

Film is an inherently expensive medium, so most budding film-makers have to wait some time before getting their hands on a camera, but perhaps criticism can clear the ground creatively by giving an artist some foretaste of his predilections and aversions (the French directors, by and large, aligned themselves with American cinema, and a new and flattering reading of Hitchcock).

All the same, the New Wave phenomenon hasn't been duplicated elsewhere on anything like the same scale. Paul Schrader, for instance, writer of *Taxi Driver* and



director of *American Gigolo*, also started out writing criticism, but his was a special case. He was brought up in a religious environment, in which films were disapproved of, and his pent-up enthusiasm once he discovered what he had been missing carried him beyond the category of mere fan. But perhaps for a truer repetition of the New Wave event, a culture is required that takes criticism seriously, as something that need not be a secondary activity.

British critics are more likely to see themselves as scriptwriters *manqués* than directors in the making. Penelope Giliatt, for a long time a film critic for *The New Yorker*, wrote the screenplay for Schlesinger's successful and influential *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, but it seems unlikely that she ever had designs on the director's chair.

The hyper-inflated economics of film means that, nowadays, a bad review of a film will be visually cancelled by a large advertisement on the same page bristling with quibbling stars (you can find someone to give five stars to pretty much anything). Academic film criticism is very

much a minority pastime, now that the medium has been losing fashionability to pop culture. The magazines that used to support interestingly hybrid writing, on the cusp of reviewing and true criticism,

have been swallowed up or limp along from issue to issue.

In the Seventies, for instance, it was possible to read an article in *New Society* about *Jaws*, which argued that Spielberg's blockbuster was essentially about the fear of female sexuality, with the savage orifice of the Great White Shark embodying the *vagina dentata* of phobic male fantasy – a perverse reading that can't quite be dismissed. It was possible to read an article in *Sight and Sound* analysing *Marathon Man* in terms of its imagery of ritual cleansing. The argument was carefully mounted: the film starts on Yom Kippur, the day of atonement; the hero's brother dies in an ornamental fountain; the climax takes place in a sewer, down which the villain's atrociously acquired wealth of diamonds is sluiced.

How to read a film: in the Seventies both *Marathon Man* and *Jaws* caused critics to become rather down in the mouth about teeth.

I remember reading this particular article, and resisting it quite fiercely, insisting mentally that *Marathon Man* was a fairly undistinguished thriller, relying on nothing much more fancy than people's fear of having their teeth assaulted by Nazis

with dental drills. But the preposterous argument has stayed with me, and has enriched the film, rather against my will, with a layer of unsuspected meaning.

But if British film culture in the Nineties is relatively impoverished, we can still boast of having given two major figures to the world, that is, to America: Quentin Crisp and David Thomson. Crisp's idiosyncratic criticism is now widely published, but he started writing it at the instigation of the editor of New York's *Christopher Street*, the flagship magazine of the gay movement, which he both contests and is embraced by.

Crisp's reviews are polite, even when they are deadly – he will find something nice to say about something, and if that means complimenting the spotlessness of the toilet in the cinema where he happened to see the film, so be it. He prefers to use surnames prefixed by "Mr" or "Miss" – a piece of gallantry that has the effect of revealing the campiness of many one-word names (Mr Sting, Miss Madonna). His agenda is clear: for him, any film at all is better than real life, but a good movie can provide a set of imaginary standards to live by: better yet, to dream by. He wants glamour rather than realism, and romance rather than tawdry consummation. He wants dreams rather than grit, because for him – and he puts his case unsurpassably – cinema is not about truth, but about compensation; and he can do grit for himself.

David Thomson's way of looking at films is very different, alert to money, to politics, to biography, but no less creative and subversive. In his novel *Suspects*, for instance, he takes as his characters the characters of films *noirs* (from *Double Indemnity* to *Body Heat*), unweaves their stories, and then reweaves them, to produce a composite portrait of American dysfunction and darkness. The cumulative effect is extraordinary: the hero of *American Gigolo* turns out, in Thomson's version, to be the son of the Faye Dunaway character in *Chinatown*.

Thomson revisits the cliché of the critic as parasite, but he is a sly sort of parasite, incubating his fantasies inside other people's films. I can't be the only person who reads the scene in *The Godfather Part II* where Kay Corleone (Diane Keaton) is raped by her estranged husband's goons on his orders, to stop her making trouble – a scene that of course exists only in *Suspects*, but has successfully been grafted from one imaginary world on to another.

Thomson's most recent project is just as bold. In his book on the *Alien* series of films, he sets out to amend them where they fall short of his standards. So he offers in alternate sections the *Alien Resurrection* that viewers were offered, the *Alien* that he thinks they deserved, and that the logic of the earlier films required. It's hard to imagine a higher achievement for film criticism than this one: remaking a movie, in people's heads at least, while it's still new.

Tomorrow: Andy Gill on rock, and Edward Seckerson on classical music criticism.

And God said, let there be light relief

PERHAPS THE old stories are still the best. Evidently the DreamWorks studio hopes so: they have looked to one of the oldest of them all, *Exodus*, as inspiration for their much-trumpeted *The Prince of Egypt*, an animated musical epic on which Jeffrey Katzenberg, one of the DreamWorks triumvirate, has staked his reputation. If it should fail, it will not be through lack of preparation or ambition. Short of God himself, no film could have a more formidable figure at its centre than Moses, not just the hero of Judeo-Christian tradition but a man once portrayed on screen by Charlton Heston himself. It doesn't come grander than that.

The Moses story is also perfect for Hollywood, in that it's one of those coming-of-age struggles that wires directly into the American dream of self-realisation and the national appetite for saving the world. Beginning with the infant Moses's famous basket ride down the Nile and subsequent rescue by Pharaoh's wife, the film concentrates on the relationship between Moses (voiced by Val Kilmer) and his step-brother Ramesses (Ralph Fiennes). It's a small but significant change from the Bible, which had Pharaoh's daughter adopting Moses – by making them brothers the film-makers forge a closer and more com-

THE BIG PICTURE

ANTHONY QUINN
THE PRINCE OF EGYPT
DIRECTORS: BRENDAN CHAPMAN, SIMON WELLS, STEVE HICKNER
STARRING: VAL KILMER, RALPH FIENNES, MICHELLE PFEIFFER
99 MINS



The Moses story is perfect for Hollywood: a classic coming-of-age struggle

plex relationship between the adoptive son and the royal heir. In its early stages we see them as rumbustious young scamps, haring around construction sites in a breakneck chariot race (very Ben-Hur) and dropping water bombs on to the heads of temple priests.

Two very different aspects of the film begin to emerge. The first is the architectural grandeur of Pharaoh's empire, a symphony in cool beige stone with *Kame-like*, deep perspectives and vertiginous drops. Humans are dwarfed to ant-like

insignificance by the towering verticals, pyramids and sphinxes. Elsewhere, the production design oods proudly to a variety of influences – the etchings of Gustave Doré, Monet's paintings, Cecil B DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* and the wide-screen immensity of David Lean (this is the sandiest film since *Lawrence of Arabia*). Most compelling of all, and the best demonstration of the animators' art, is the nightmarish epiphany of a palace fresco coming to life and explaining to Moses his own nar-

row escape from the Pharaoh's massacre. It's a cartoon version of a flashback, yet it achieves a hallucinatory horror that is unmatched even by the film's other great set-piece, a spectral plague whipping around streets and through doors to claim the first-born of every household.

The second and more problematic dimension of the film is the failure of the music to complement the drama. There are sequences of coruscating emotional force in *The Prince of Egypt* – Moses acknowledging his ancestry; God announcing himself to Moses from the burning bush; the Nile turning blood red; Ramesses laying out his dead son as Moses looks on in sorrowing compassion. If ever a film composer had the opportunity to make a name for himself, it's here. Yet Stephen Schwartz's weedy, unadventurous songshaven't a clue about rendering these scenes with the requisite intensity, and that includes the overwrought warbling of Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston oo "When You Believe". Only once does a tune rise to the occasion, when

Steve Martin and Martin Short perform the duet "Playing With the Big Boys" – a sinister invocation of the Egyptian deities – though it's as much their cabaret turn as the temple priests which quickens the interest.

Comic relief is otherwise thin on the ground; the idea of Disney-style anthropomorphism was clearly judged inappropriate (allegedly, the role of a talking camel gave somebody the hump – it ended up on the cutting-room floor). An air of cautiousness hangs over the film; little wonder given the number of consultants the DreamWorks team recruited – ministers, clerics, rabbinical scholars and experts were invited to give their two-pennorth, and the feeling of storytelling-by-committee is hard to ignore. While the fear of offending is understandable, the earnest tone seems to squeeze much of the life from the film, and this despite the vocal stylings of Jeff Goldblum, Michelle Pfeiffer, Sandra Bullock and Patrick Stewart. Give credit nonetheless: the film-makers cover 70 years of Moses's life in an hour and a half, and manage to invest it with a numinous authority. Indeed, *The Prince of Egypt* has all the gravitas it can handle; what's missing, ironically enough, is not weight but vitality – animation, in a word. On release from tomorrow

of his contribution to the big-screen version of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, will formally mark the end of his acting career. Fortunately, "Tiresome" showbiz has left him with plenty of cash to indulge in his plans for the future: "I'm interested in music, I write and I'm just going to drop out."

EDWARD NORTON, by far the best thing about the recent *Rounders*, is set to direct his first film, says *Variety*. Keeping the Faith is a romantic comedy with a budget of around \$30m, in which Norton will also star alongside Ben Stiller. The former will play a Catholic priest and the latter a rabbi, both of whom fall in love with the same woman. That role, expected to be hotly contested, has yet to be cast.

VARIETY ALSO reports that Kenneth Branagh has cast Alicia Silverstone in his forthcoming film adaptation of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Branagh himself will star and direct, and is expected to transform Shakespeare's comedy into a 1930s musical comedy.

He shoots aliens, doesn't he?

Well, yes, Will Smith is amply gifted with that ability. And now he is poised to take over the world. How?

By doing proper acting. By Sarah Gristwood

The part Will Smith plays in *Enemy of the State*, a densely plotted thriller from the Jerry Bruckheimer/Tony Scott stable, was first shown to Tom Cruise. That is because "Tom gets to look at just about everything in that age group", says Bruckheimer. But Cruise was tied in to the never-ending shoot of Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*, and Smith was next in line. He is in that league and making that money (Bruckheimer guesses that \$14m is "close" to Smith's *Enemy* fee).

It is also significant, of course, that Smith is readily cast in roles that are not colour-specific. At 30, he's turning into the hero who most reflects the all-American idealised identity; it's no coincidence that he's had a run of films, from *Men in Black* to next summer's release, *The Wild, Wild West*, a spin-off of the Seventies TV series that is scheduled for release on 4 July. He says he can find the joke both black and white audiences will find funny – albeit not necessarily for the same reason.

He has also said that being black is in fact an asset in Hollywood today. "Once you've broken through the first slight block, you're a fixture in Hollywood. For myself, Denzel [Washington], Eddie Murphy, Larry Fishburne, our position is a lot more solid because there are so few of us. More solid than Matthew McConaughey or Chris O'Donnell, or even Leonardo DiCaprio. Because there's a thousand guys sitting there waiting for Leo to turn down a good piece of work. Also, with actors of ethnicity, there's an entire community of people willing you to succeed." But does Smith really need moral support? He grew up in the middle-class suburbia of West Philadel-

phia, the son of a businessman who had come out of the army. One day, his father tore the brick off the front of the family's huge icehouse and told 12-year-old Will and his younger brother, Harry, that they had to rebuild it. Six months later, when the sons had finished, their father said to them: "Now don't ever tell me there's nothing you can't do." It worked. Smith still talks of his career in terms of careful construction. "My ace in the hole is my dangerously obsessive drive," he told *American Premiere* recently.

Like Tom Hanks, Smith doesn't threaten a man's virility or a woman's sense of security

"He's been a success at everything he's done, from the time he was 15 years old," Bruckheimer says. "He's tall, he's handsome; he's at ease with himself and effortless in manner." It's the picture, in some ways, of a bland man. But bland isn't bad, necessarily. Tom Hanks once told me the secret of his success: "I don't threaten any man's sense of virility, or any woman's sense of security or decorum." The same could be said of Smith – and it's a surprisingly versatile quality. In *Enemy of the State*, he is the hero to Jon Voight's baddie. But "The thing about Jon Voight is that he's really the sweetest guy. If he rang your doorbell and said his car had broken down, you wouldn't think twice about letting him in. I think I have that same sort of energy."

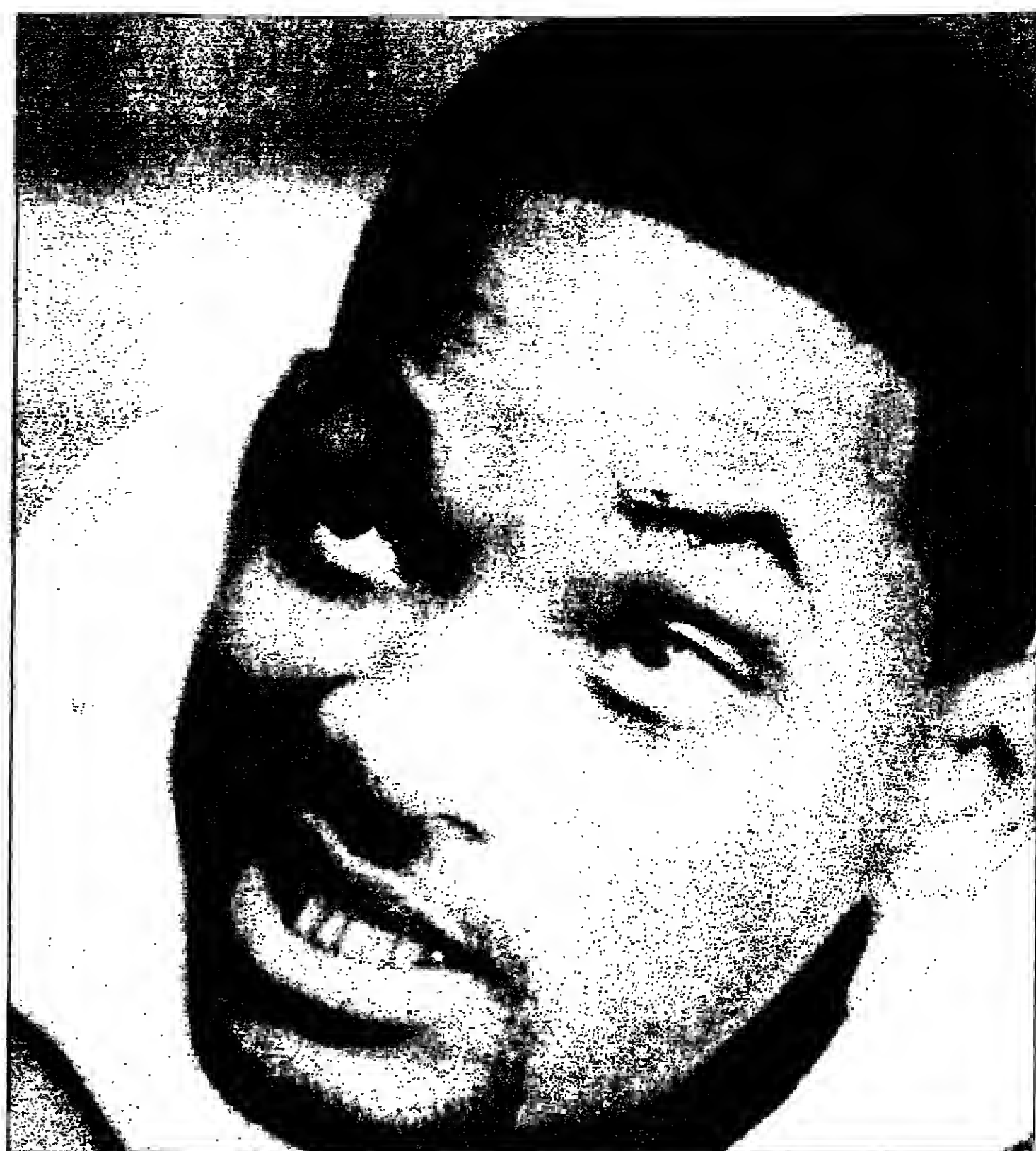
Smith started early in the music clubs, turning out rap that was edgy enough to be real, but safe enough

to play in Peoria. At 18, he was rich and on the road, and though he didn't do drugs, the people he was around weren't exactly squeaky clean. By the time he was 20, though, he was through all that: "ready to settle down and have a family".

He was 21 when he took his rap character, the Fresh Prince, into the network TV sitcom *Fresh Prince of Bel Air*. Music videos apart, he had never acted, but the producer Quincy Jones persuaded NBC that he could do it. Smith, meanwhile, set about convincing himself.

He took acting lessons and studied tapes of other actors. His first film role was a small part in *Where the Day Takes You*, a 1992 film about LA street kids. His first important one was as the gay con-man in *Six Degrees of Separation*, a role so unlikely that he reckoned it wouldn't matter if he failed. Needless to say, he didn't – he lists it as his only real acting credential. *Enemy* – but he also took flak for refusing to kiss another male actor on the mouth. Not a mistake he would make today.

His breakthrough was *Bad Boys*, the summer action hit of 1995. He always reckoned the way to be the greatest movie star ever "would be to combine Eddie Murphy, Tom Hanks and Arnold Schwarzenegger", he told *Premiere*. He'd done comedy; he'd now done action. He'd always, like Hanks, been "the regular guy". What was missing was the pure acting. That's why he took *Enemy*. "When I came off *Independence Day* on to *Men in Black*, I don't think people had any doubt I could fight aliens. But *Enemy of the State* is more of an acting role. Any time you're in a film with people who have 'Academy Award winning actor' before their name, it gives you the



Will Smith: ideally, he'd like to combine Eddie Murphy, Tom Hanks and Arnold Schwarzenegger

Retna

chills. But once you dive into the scenes, you find it lifts you."

He may – and it would be an important rite of passage – be about to play an African-American hero, Muhammad Ali. "We met a few months ago, and he said, 'You're almost pretty enough to play me.'"

But he still says that "music is the most personal thing – it's about me. As an actor you're more a tool for a director. It's about someone else's dream." Living outside LA with his actress wife, Jada Pinkett, baby Jaden, and Trey (his five-year-old

son by a first marriage to Sheree Zampino), he has his own recording studio in the house – along with his own golf course, and all the apparatus needed to ensure star privacy.

"There are things I have to defend myself against. The other day someone set a camera up in the bushes at my house. I have to have someone check the phones. But in LA, for the most part, you can hang out. If I go into Tower Records, well, Arnold Schwarzenegger just left." But the fact that his wife also has a public identity compounds their visibility.

"Like they say, the sum is greater than the parts and it often feels like there are more than two people famous in our house. One plus one equals five... People want the pictures that much more. It must have been the same with Bruce and Demi." The comparison is not unreasonable, really.

Ask about his plans and you get a joke for an answer: "Run for President – I think I'd win." It is a joke, presumably? He has a shopping list of possible future movies, including a remake of *A Star is Born*, with the roles

reputedly changed so that he'd play what used to be the woman's part.

"We're talking to Whitney Houston about the film; as for the part, someone suggested that concept, but we don't quite know what all the ramifications would be. I think in the end you've got to go for the Kris Kristofferson role – the drunk, someone who's frivolously frittering their life away."

It certainly wouldn't be type-casting. Not by a long way. *Enemy of the State* is released on 26 December

Beneath the underdog

Painer Werner Fassbinder. Not a very nice man, by all accounts. However, a major London retrospective of his films in the new year will enable us to examine his talent, which was immense. By Geoffrey Macnab

AFTER HIS death aged 37 in 1982, Rainer Werner Fassbinder was enshrined as the sacred monster of European cinema. No new article about him failed to mention his voracious consumption of alcohol and drugs, or his despotic behaviour towards friends and colleagues. Biographers, journalists and old colleagues did for him what Albert Goldman did for Elvis, mythologising his excesses, and slowly turning him into a grotesque comic-book figure in the process. Fassbinder was the overgrown baby, flabby and soft-skinned. ("The tantrums he threw, even while in the bath, made the resemblance undeniable," wrote his spurned lover, Kurt Raab.) He was the sadist, once beaten up by his own film crew for continually trying to humiliate a colleague. He was the tormented, suicidal bisexual.

Fassbinder's widow, Juliane Lorenz, wants us to stop concentrating on the life ("it's so uninteresting"). She edited all Fassbinder's films from *Despair* (1977) onwards, and was sharing an apartment with him in Munich when he died. Her point of living and working with him doesn't tally at all with the myth. "We led a normal, normal life. We got up, we ate, we went to work, we came home, we went to restaurants. Sometimes he was very honest with people and it hurt them. But I never found him a monster."

Next month's retrospective at London's National Film Theatre, organised in collaboration with the Fassbinder Foundation (which Lorenz now runs) includes all of the director's film and television work. It ought, at the very least, to remind cinephiles what a protean talent Fassbinder was. The season includes little-seen Westerns (*Whitey*), science-fiction films (*World on a Wire*), period pieces and television dramas, as well as all the movies that made Fassbinder the darling of the festival circuit – films such as *The Marriage of Maria Braun*, *Fear Eats the Soul*, *Lili Marleen*, *Querelle* and *Veronika Voss*.

What made Fassbinder special?



Fassbinder on the set of 'Querelle'

Kobal

As one critic put it, he was West Germany's Balzac. Between 1966 and 1982 he made dozens of films that probed the reality of life in the brave new post-war world – a German *Comédie Humaine*. His movies revealed the racism of the society, its intolerance towards sexual difference, and its troubled relationship with the not-so-distant Nazi past.

An outcast himself, Fassbinder stood up for types regarded as pariahs or nonentities. His favourite figure in fiction was Franz Biberkopf, the former convict released from Tegel prison into the maelstrom of Twenties Germany in Alfred Döblin's Modernist masterpiece, *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. Biberkopf is the little man as hero, a well intentioned, none-too-bright figure stumbling through life, always being dragged down. In Fassbinder's 13-part television adaptation of the novel, made in 1979-80, he is played by Günter Lamprecht as the reliable,

honest everyman. His counterpart (Gottfried John), with whom he falls in love, is the absolute opposite – unctuous, dissembling and disloyal. According to John, each man is the other's alter ego. "I think that's

An outcast himself, Fassbinder stood up for types regarded as pariahs or nonentities

what fascinated [Fassbinder] about the original novel: the good personality and the negative one who are absolutely one and the same."

He may speak up for losers and outcasts, but he seldom sentimentalises or patronises them. As the film historian Thomas Elsaesser notes in his book *Fassbinder's Germany*, "one finds [in his work] an almost Bunuelian vision of the rights of out-

casts and underdogs to be as mean, inhuman and evil as anyone else." Some of his characters behave with a viciousness that can hardly even be countenanced. You think, for instance, of the lacerating psychodrama in *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (1972) or the casual brutality shown towards the Greek worker in *Katzelmacher* (1969).

But the films often also contain moments of great delicacy. There is a magical (if slightly kitsch) scene in *Veronika Voss* in which the sports reporter comes to the aid of the ex-movie star caught in a rainstorm. "Umbrella and protection," she smiles at him, as if he is an old-fashioned knight. As a rule, though, the women characters in his films are stronger and more complex than the men. "To my mind, women don't exist to turn men on. They don't have this function of merely being objects – that is one aspect of the cinema I really despise," he said.

Hanna Schygulla, Irm Hermann, Barbara Sukova and Ingrid Caven all became international stars on the back of performances in his films.

Fassbinder was inspired by Hollywood melodrama and Brechtian theatre in equal measure. His range of influences was immense and often baffling. At the start of his career, when he was trying unsuccessfully to get into film school, he suggested that the play he most wanted to adapt for the screen was John Mortimer's *Lunch Break*. At first glance, the idea of the rebellious wunderkind of German cinema tackling a play by the creator of *Rumpole* is wildly improbable, but many of his projects were equally unlikely. Whoever would have imagined that he would want to make an austere, black-and-white adaptation of a classic 19th-century novel such as Fontane's *Effi Briest*, or that he'd tackle Nabokov in *Despair*?

Fassbinder's films are often rough. They were made at such speed that they could hardly be otherwise. Even towards the end of his career, when he was working with bigger budgets, he still struck a ferocious tempo. Lorenz recalls that *Lola* was made in 24 days. She edited while the film was shooting and had the final cut ready two days after shooting was complete. *The Marriage of Maria Braun* took 30 days, "which was a lot for Rainer".

Both *Despair* and his final film, *Querelle*, were shortened to meet the whims of the producers, who refused to accept films more than two hours long. Lorenz insists that they were much stronger in their original state. She hopes to restore them. Who knows? The next Fassbinder retrospective may boast "director's cuts" of both. In the meantime, audiences should reacquaint themselves with the director. They'll find that, 18 years on from his death, his films are as uplifting, infuriating and entertaining as ever.

The Fassbinder Retrospective is at the National Film Theatre, London throughout January and February

DOUBLE BILL

ROWAN WOODS, DIRECTOR OF 'THE BOYS', ON HIS IDEAL CINEMATIC PAIRING



WORLD WITHOUT SUN
DIR. JACQUES COUSTEAU
(1964)

WHEN FATHER WAS AWAY ON BUSINESS
DIR. EMIR KUSTURICA
(1985)

MY CHOICE is based on having only ever seen one double bill – *Deliverance* with *A Clockwork Orange* – since when I have seen films separately. I hated them as a double bill. They rubbed up against each other. I was exhausted after *Deliverance* and so there was no punch left by the time I got to *A Clockwork Orange*. I would never choose to see two story films back to back, especially two really good features; it's sacrilege to have one in your mind and for it to infuse the next film. That's why I would choose to see a documentary and a fictional film together, so there wouldn't be such conflict.

Jacques Cousteau's *World Without Sun* is an obscure documentary about how Cousteau and his team inhabited an underwater village. It was an extraordinary scientific experiment. They built an underwater habitation to see what would happen, to see whether they could live underwater for weeks on end.

When *Father Was Away On Business* is one of my favourites of all time. It's a beautiful film about an



extended family in Yugoslavia, presenting this wonderful world surrounding one family alongside a potent political allegory. The story is very moving; it's about a man who is removed from his family, his wife, children and grandparents, because he is suspected of being a political agitator. It's set in relation to a communist regime very like latter-day East Germany. The guy's brother-in-law is a member of the Communist Party and he is informed on by him. It's about a family put under terrible pressure.

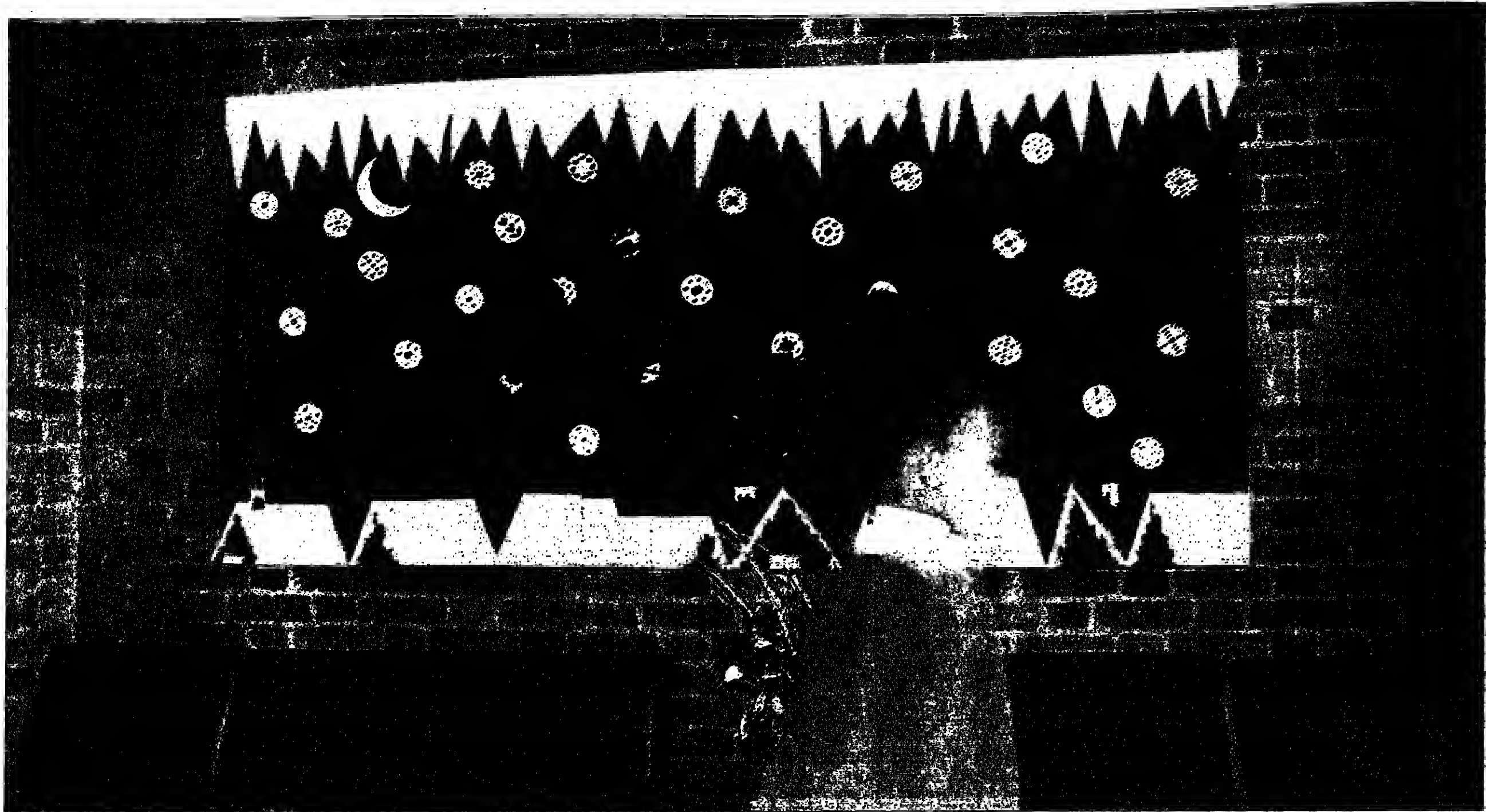
Not only are they two different genres of film, but they couldn't be further apart: the documentary is non-political and non-confrontational, in stark contrast to the potent fiction with its strong political allegory. Plus the Cousteau film is a particularly lyrical documentary, when you most often expect a documentary to be more political than fiction.

For me, the problem with double bills is how they make you watch films. It goes back to film school and film festivals; inevitably, you begin to obsess over the comparisons and contrasts between films and their modes of storytelling. They shouldn't be analysed on anything other than their own merits. It's a philosophical point of view – it's about wanting to see a film in the purest possible way.

INTERVIEW BY
JENNIFER RODGER

We wish you a merry Winterval

How should schools approach Christmas in a multi-cultural society of many different faiths? By Diana Hinds



Pupils at St Matthew's School in Nechells, Birmingham will have both religious and secular images portrayed this Christmas

News Team Birmingham

Knowing how to approach the Christmas story can be tricky in these days of political correctness, in a society where only a small minority are regular Christian churchgoers and where schools teach many children from other faiths.

When Birmingham City Council, in an effort to attract more shoppers over a longer period, christened its programme of festive events over Christmas and New Year "Winterval", the move was pounced on by tabloid newspapers and snorted at by the Bishop of Birmingham.

"I laughed out loud when our city council came out with 'Winterval' as a way of not talking about Christmas," said the Right Rev Mark Santer, in a recent Christmas message to his flock. "No doubt it was a well-meaning attempt not to offend, not to exclude, not really to say anything at all... Now, it seems, the secular world, which professes respect for all, is deeply embarrassed by faith."

Schools, too, can be "embarrassed" by faith. Lat Blaylock, at the Professional Council for Religious Education, says there is a small

number that tackle Christmas with any reference to Christianity. But equally unsatisfactory, he says, are those schools that approach Christmas with the assumption that everyone celebrates it as a "Christian festival".

Best practice, he explains, is for a school to reflect on the beliefs and festivals of a faith, in a way that does not require children to participate, and allows them to bring to it their own experiences and insights.

'Nativity plays should show the reality, not a sentimental stable with no smell and no cold'

The introduction, four years ago, of "agreed syllabuses" for religious education, drawn up by each local authority, has helped to give teachers more confidence in the subject, says Ian Wragg, chairman of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales. Typically, these syllabuses introduce different faiths more gradually and in more depth than in the past, so that five-to-seven-year-olds may study Christianity and one other faith, and

seven-to-eleven-year-olds, Christianity and two others.

"There is less of the 'round-the-world, let's-have-a-party' attitude to world faiths than there was in the 'Eighties and early Nineties,'" adds Lat Blaylock.

A considered approach to religion will look not just at the trappings of a particular festival, but at the ideas and beliefs that lie behind it. So, at Christmas, Ian Wragg would like to see a little more than children just

Birmingham (see left), this is the second year running that its pupils - 60 per cent Afro-Caribbean and raised race, 30 per cent Asian - will experience the Christian Christmas story in July. There will be carols and a Nativity play in church, for all children and their parents, as well as a secular concert; and the crib scene in one school entrance will be balanced by a secular, Santa-based display in another.

"We will be putting the emphasis on giving to others at Christmas, rather than receiving, and because this is a deprived community, we talk about giving of ourselves," says Maggie Scott, St Matthew's head teacher - a Christian, "but not a Bible-thumping one".

The school must share the Christmas story with its pupils, she believes; in many cases, if the school doesn't, no one else will. "It is part of this country's heritage and culture, and we would be depriving children if we didn't tell them about it. Also, we must develop the whole child: their spirituality, care and consideration for others. Christian principles are good principles for bringing up a child, regardless of faith, and Christmas is a good time for looking at these things."

At St Matthew's Church of England primary school, in inner-city

Birmingham (see left), this is the second year running that its pupils - 60 per cent Afro-Caribbean and raised race, 30 per cent Asian - will experience the Christian Christmas story in July. There will be carols and a Nativity play in church, for all children and their parents, as well as a secular concert; and the crib scene in one school entrance will be balanced by a secular, Santa-based display in another.

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WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME

WE ASKED children at St Matthew's, Nechells, Birmingham, what was important to them about Christmas:

Coral, 5: "We're going to my nan's for dinner. We'll have a huge turkey and potatoes. I like Christmas because Santa brings us presents. I haven't got a chimney, but I think he'll sneak in through my letterbox."

David, 6: "I'm going to India. I'm going to a temple to celebrate and I've got to go there to pray for my granddad because he died. When I come back from India I've got to go to church, and sing hosannas."

Dinah, 10: "I think Christmas is about being together with your family and loving each other. We'll have all sorts of food: mutton, rice, chicken, peas, salad. We'll put music on really, really loudly and start dancing. Sometimes we have music on other days, but it's more special

at Christmas time because you have got to enjoy yourself."

Jason, 10: "Christmas is about turning over a new leaf. It's a special time because you get to know your family more. We go to my nan's on Christmas Eve, and in the morning we go to Learnington to see my auntie. I like people's faces when you give them something. I don't like the story about Jesus as much as I like Noah's Ark. Noah's Ark shows what happens if you don't believe other people - and also I like the animals. In the Christmas story I don't really like people dying - all the baby boys - because I feel sad a lot."

Kamran, 8: "Sometimes we have presents and Christmas cards, but Christmas is like a normal day for us. My brother and sister have to wake up extra early, around 5.30am, because they fast. In the afternoon we put the television on and wait until the fasting is over, at

around 12.30pm. After that we all have food and drink. A bit later, after Christmas, is Eid. That's when we have our presents."

Philip, 10: "My mum does the Nativity play at our church with the vicar's wife, and this year I'm an alien. The alien comes down to earth, and it's asking questions like, what's Christmas? I like the Christmas story, especially when it's changed and it's got aliens in it as well. I've got to speak for myself, and I'm going to be all green with little antennae sticking out at the top. It makes the story more interesting."

David, 10: "We don't have Christmas because we are Chinese. We have the Chinese New Year in January, and then we visit our friends and cousins, and people give these little red bags with money in. On Christmas I sometimes think of my friends enjoying themselves. But I don't really feel left out."

Colour and sound to seduce the most reluctant young souls

HOME HELP

8. SOFTWARE TO HELP WITH HOMEWORK

WITH CORE subjects exerting a big squeeze on the curriculum, art and music are something of an endangered species on the average school timetable. While there is no substitute for splashing about real paint or scratching out "Little Brown Jug" on a violin, computers can pick up some of the creative slack by offering different ways for children to express themselves - and hone their IT skills at the same time.

The beauty of art software, for instance, is that it allows small children to make pictures before they can even grasp a pencil. Take Pip's Picture Maker (Ten out of Ten, 3-12 years, £4.99), a daff but satisfying mix of sticker art and paint package, with various themed backgrounds and hundreds of apt or wholly inappropriate "stickers" with which to populate and embellish them. Zach, aged three, used the Wild West disc, creating his own idiosyncratic version of life on the Western frontier, complete with campfire, cowboy and kangaroo. Also available in

farm, park, seaside, pirate, haunted house and space versions.

If you prefer something more focused, Print Artist Junior (Sierra, 5-12 years, £14.99) has a multitude of different art projects, including paper aeroplanes, banners, cards, mobiles, masks, and puppets; modify the ready-made templates, or make your own. It's easy to use and great for those kids stuck on what to make Granny for Christmas, but as with most art packages, you really do need a colour printer to get your results down on paper.

Of the paint programs on the market, Art Attack (Europress, 4-14 years, £29.99) has more appeal than many. Based on the popular children's programme, it has plenty of whizzy features to let kids make pictures and cartoons. Much beloved by all my boys, who recite "Hello and welcome to Art Attack" in a perfect imitation of the presenter Neil Buchanan's characteristic drawl. "I know everything about it," says Flan, aged six, its biggest fan. "It's

much better than paper because you have all the colours in the world, like turquoise and purple and red."

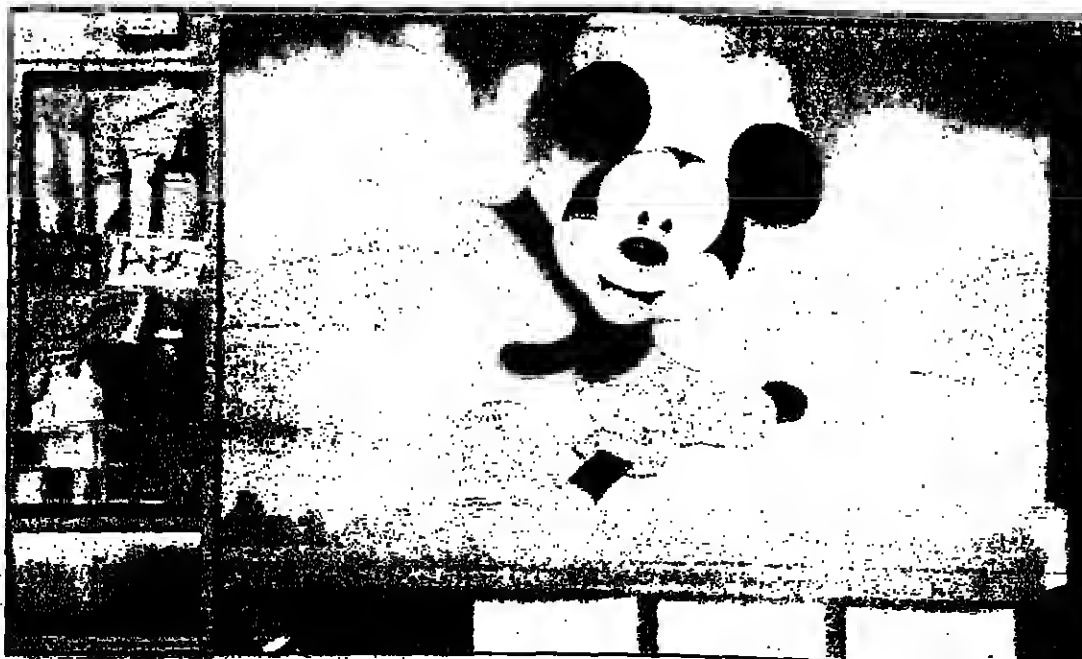
But it seems that Disney can still work greater magic, because we all fell instantly under the spell of Magic Artist (all ages, £29.99). It is packed with exceptionally diverting features; you can produce professional-looking pictures in seconds or just doodle away to your heart's content, accompanied by a host of splashing and spurling sound effects. Choose from cartoon-style backgrounds and Disney characters, or go free style with features that let you spray the screen with ladybirds or splatter stars across a starry night. The family favourite was the incredibly realistic snudge feature, which lets you blend colours just as if they were real paint.

Top marks for entertainment, however, must go to Orly's Draw-a-Story (Broderbund, 5-10 years, £29.99), a paint program with a difference. It is instructed by an irrepressible Jamaican girl, Orly, and

her Caribbean amphibian frog friend, Lancelot ("gribbit, man"), and the characters you draw come to life as the various stories unfold. It's guaranteed to rouse even the most reluctant artist.

Music is perhaps not so digitally accessible, but I was most taken with Musicolour (Europress, 5 years and over, £29.99), which is remarkable, since I am about as musical as Des O'Connor. The software bridges that gap between serious and fun, making the world of tetra chords and accidentals comprehensible to the most melodically challenged. I particularly enjoyed the free composition option, which is cleverly devised so that whatever near-random sequence of notes I chose sounded wonderful.

Orchestra (Attica, 14 years and over, £39.99) works on a grander scale, guiding you through the players, instruments and conventions of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra with Sir Simon Rattle at the helm. You can build your own



Disney's Magic Artist allows children to draw pictures or simply doodle Disney Interactive

orchestra, find out about different instruments, and even watch a rendition of Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. There's rather too much of Rattle in various dramatic conductor poses, but along with the audio CD of the Britten piece, it's an entertaining and useful introduction to this cornerstone of classical music.

At the opposite end of the scale, Lemon Dog in Soundlands (Europress, 5-7 years, £19.99) offers a light-hearted musical game to help

Lemon Dog find and release the members of his band. Appealing, with wonderful graphics, but little in terms of serious musical instruction, it will keep the kids happy over the holidays - but don't expect them to turn into musical prodigies. "It's really cool cracking the musical codes," said eight-year-old Joshua, after two hours of foot-tapping play.

The winner in the light entertainment category, however, is Wannabe a Pop Star (Attica, 8-16 years, £14.99). You can fulfil every

teenage fantasy by hiring a band, mixing and recording your song, and then playing a live concert to a hysterically appreciative audience in a bid to get to number one. This is a wonderfully toogee-in-cheek ego trip with some realistic features; you can even print out your song. I haven't enjoyed myself so much in a long time, although, sadly, my song wasn't a smash hit. Don't give up the day job, was the peremptory verdict. EMMA HAUGHTON

YOUR VIEWS

Learning vs teaching
HOW RIGHT Patricia Broadfoot ("A nice little earner", EDUCATION, 3 December) is to highlight the need to focus on what has been learned instead of what has been taught.

Positive learning culture will only be achieved when students are fully involved in their learning. Assessment is not what you do to someone. It needs to be participatory and understood by teacher and student.

The potential as a motivating factor, particularly for under-achieving boys, is huge.

Investment in quality research and development projects looking at learning, particularly in relation to the Government's stated commitment to lifelong learning and a learning culture for all, is long overdue.

If we were to ask students in our schools and colleges, "What did you learn today?" I have a feeling that we would be surprised and disappointed by the vast majority of their responses.

JUDITH MULLEN
President
Secondary Heads Association
Leicester

Scrap the RAE now
DAVID BLUNKETT is reported as having said that his son's university teachers were not interested in teaching and more interested in their own research.

Mr Blunkett could stop the absurd, unseemly and futile paper chase that is the Research Assessment Exercise right now, at a stroke, and save at least £2m to go to much needed additional teaching resources.

Indeed, he was also reported as saying - before the general election - that he would do something about it. Instead he has done nothing, except, possibly, postpone it, thus adding to its theatricality. Perhaps he is preoccupied by his latest panacea - fast-track promotion for excellent young graduate teachers; yet another insult to the old hackers who will presumably be expected to mentor these stars of the future.

DR JACK EATON
School of Management & Business
University of Wales
Aberystwyth

More interviews, please
AS AN Oxford graduate and ex-comprehensive pupil, may I ask what the problem is with Oxford interviews? ("Oxbridge entrants face real university challenge", EDUCATION, 10 December.)

Would it not be a good idea for all universities to interview their potential candidates to make sure that they have a good grasp of what their course actually involves? Will the brightest candidates not make just as good a career from a course at York, Warwick or Durham?

I do agree that it would be fairer for all concerned to have university applications after A-level results come out. However, if Ms Clanchy thinks Oxbridge applications are like a lottery, she might consider the various hoops, stages and processes graduate recruiters subject finalists to.

HELEN SMITH
Winchester

Spell it out to children
THE PICTURE on the front page of today's EDUCATION section (10 December) gives the real clue as to what we can learn from the Germans. The Germans do not only match the abilities of teachers to the requirements of their pupils and reward them well. For the second time this century, they have just made another serious effort to ensure that all pupils have a reasonable chance of profiting from the time they spend at school. They have made German spelling a little more regular yet again, although it was already vastly more predictable than English before this last reform.

We waste the time and energy of young children, and dissipate their enthusiasm for learning, by forcing them to memorise contradictory and utterly pointless spelling conundrums like "to-go-do-through-who-two-ton", "light-height-weight" and "the-me-see-sea-key-quay-delete-chief-seize", as well as "shoddy-body", "muddy-study", "account-across" and "always-all right".

If we were seriously concerned about improving educational chances for all, we would put an end to such nonsensical intellectual hoops, which vast numbers of children simply cannot negotiate.

The reason why a quarter of English-speaking adults worldwide cannot read simple instructions, and nearly half are very uncertain writers is perfectly clear. It would be hard to invent a more difficult system than English spelling, even if one really tried. It has repeatedly driven teachers into vain searches for better teaching methods, and sometimes the adoption of some very peculiar ones indeed.

Millions and millions of pounds have had to be spent on various remedial measures over the years to ensure that not just the most bright leave school able to read and to write.

Once in a while, a more serious attempt to make all children more literate comes along. Like under this government now. The inevitable outcome of such campaigns in the past has always been the squeezing of other subjects, especially the arts, but also science and maths.

I have no hesitation about predicting that we will once again wake up to this fact before long. Primary school teachers, who are always hard-pressed for time in our schools, can only give more attention to one area of the curriculum by taking it from something else.

So why not grab the bull by the horns once and for all and stop it ramming through our children's learning and doing such harm? Why do we keep obeying a system that one man (Dr Johnson) decreed almost 250 years ago? Why do we not simplify English spelling, and thereby make school time profitable for many more children than it is now?

MASHA BELL
Sandford
Wareham
Dorset

Sedation for students
I READ with interest the piece written by Professor Ted Wragg (View From Here, EDUCATION, 10 December), in particular, his worries about the sedation of his students. I couldn't agree more, but from what I can see, it is those within education itself that have created this situation, and constantly perpetuate it.

I am an adult student, currently taking a master's

degree in education. Not having had the opportunity to continue my education in my younger years, I sought to improve myself, and gain some qualifications in middle age.

However, as I am progressing further up the long ladder of academia, I am becoming increasingly disenchanted with the entire business.

Being an adult, I entered my studies with some views, opinions and an experience of life. What I was presented with during my degree course was an orthodoxy that I neither agreed with, nor believed in, and yet, if I wanted to achieve my qualification, I had to "toe the line". I was fed psycho-babble, counselling claptrap, and was expected to digest theories that were neither proven, nor even agreed upon by their peers.

On the one occasion that I drifted "off message", I was swiftly punished for my audacity. I was marked down, which could have cost me my honours degree.

Having paid a great deal of my own money for the privilege, I learned never to do that again. If I, as a fully paying adult, can't make that kind of statement, then what chance does a young, inexperienced student have?

With financial and social pressures to achieve, I am afraid that Professor Wragg is going to see a lot more sedated students. This is not the sixties, when higher education was virtually free, and jobs were relatively easy to obtain.

If there are any possibilities for change (and personally, I can't see that happening) then it has to come from those who are within the system.

Education itself has been engulfed by psychological mumbo jumbo. Get rid of some of that baggage, there's a start. Or is that too revolutionary for you lot!

DISENCHANTED
Milton Keynes

Please send your letters to Wendy Berliner, Editor, EDUCATION, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5DL. Include a day time telephone number. Fax letters to EDUCATION on 0171 293 2451; e-mail: educ@independent.co.uk. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

PASSED/FAILED

SIR HARRY KROTO FRS

Nobel prizewinner Sir Harry Kroto, 60, is a specialist in spectroscopy and nanotechnology, and a co-founder of the Vega Science Trust (www.vega.org.uk) which makes scientific programmes for the BBC2 Learning Zone

New kid on the block

My first school was Merehall Street primary school in Bolton. I was the kid with the funny name, Krotoschiner, which had its origins in Silesia where my father's family originated. He changed it to Kroto in 1955, so it is now thought by some to be Japanese. At school, my favourite subject was art. Although science has always been the way I have earned my living, if there had ever seemed to be a possibility of earning my living by art, I would certainly have considered that.



Bolton Wanderer: I had to get a scholarship as my parents were pretty poor. There was an exam to Bolton Junior and to Bolton School itself. This has ended up as an independent school and it bothers me that, were I today in the same financial situation as my parents had been, I would not be able to send my children to this exceptional school. Though I did not like exams or homework any more than other kids, I spent as much time at school as I could. My father made me finish all my homework and I had to stay up until it was not only complete, but passed his inspection - midnight if necessary.

Quantum Meccano: At home, I had a Meccano set with which I played endlessly. New toys (mainly Lego) have eclipsed Meccano and this has been a major disaster as far as the education of kids is concerned. Meccano is a real engineering kit and teaches a particular skill: the sensitive touch needed to thread a nut on to a bolt and tighten them with a screwdriver and spanner so that they stay locked - but not so tightly that the thread is stripped.

Not very grand old Duke of York: I played some sport, in particular tennis. In the sixth form, I

acted in the school play, *Henry V*, as the Duke of York, a one-line part. In his biography, Ian McKellen, who was in the same year, mentions the production as a crucial play in his career. I had no aspirations to go on stage; I had no ambitions - certainly no ambitions to be a scientist - other than just going to university.

Big bangs theory: I was good at science and started to develop an unhealthy interest in chemistry and was fascinated by the smells and bangs that are now banned. I was encouraged by the sixth-form chemistry teacher, Dr Harry Heaney (now a professor at Loughborough University), to go to Sheffield University because he reckoned it had at the time the best chemistry department.

Cover story: At Sheffield, I played for the university tennis team and we got to the Universities Athletics Union finals twice. Without me, they would probably have

been champions. I ended up as president of the university's athletics council and spent some two to three hours each day attending to administration in the union. That year's involvement in embryonic politics was enough to last a lifetime. In between the tennis, some snooker and football, designing covers for the termly magazine *Arrows*, painting murals as backdrops for balls and playing the guitar at local folk clubs, I managed to do enough chemistry to get a first-class BSc and a PhD.

Sound as Bell: I also got married. Marg and I decided we wanted to live abroad for a while and I had an attractive offer of a post-doctoral position at the National Research Council in Ottawa. After two years, I got a post-doctoral year in the US, at Bell Labs, New Jersey. When I came back to a post-doctoral position at Sussex, my annual salary dropped from \$15,000 to £1,400 - ouch!

INTERVIEW BY JONATHAN SALE

TEL: 0171 293 2222

APPOINTMENTS: EDUCATION, COURSES

FAX: 0171 293 2505

The University of Reading
Department of Land Management & Development
Research Officer

The Department has recently been awarded a number of small-scale research projects sponsored by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and professional firms with industry collaborators. These projects range from an analysis of the serviced office sector to the role of the expert witness. The Research Officer would provide support to a number of academics and therefore must be adaptable and flexible in approach.

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Informal enquiries should be directed to Ginny Gibson 0118 931 8172 e-mail: V.A.Gibson@reading.ac.uk

Application forms available from Personnel Office, The University of Reading, Whiteknights, PO Box 217, Reading RG6 6AH. Tel: 0118 931 6771 (answerphone). Closing date for applications 4 January 1999. Please quote Reference R9861.

The University of Reading
Centre for Applied Language Studies
Lecturer in TEFL

Applicants must have a PhD in Applied Linguistics or TEFL/TOEFL with special reference to reading. They should have experience in EFL teaching in public sector schools outside the UK, and of distance study teaching. The appointee will teach on the MA TEFL programme, contribute to the writing and teaching of distance study MA courses, supervise research, contribute to the running of short courses, and carry out and publish research.

This is a 3-year contract. Salary on the scale Lecturer Grade B £22,726 to £29,048 per annum. USS benefits apply.

Apply for further particulars and application forms (2 copies) to the Personnel Office, The University of Reading, Whiteknights, PO Box 217, Reading RG6 6AH. Tel: 0118 931 6771 (answerphone). E-mail: Personnel@reading.ac.uk giving name and full address. Closing date for applications 30 January 1999. Please quote Reference AC9836.

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Informal enquiries to Steve Ryan 0116 257 7663, email: sar@dmu.ac.uk or Roy Soden 0116 255 7407, email: const@dmu.ac.uk

Application forms and further details are available from The Personnel Department, De Montfort University, The Gateway, Leicester LE1 9BH. Tel: 0116 255 6433 (24 hour answerphone). Please quote Ref: 1055. Closing date: 18 January 1999

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DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT ADMINISTRATION

Applications are invited for each of the following posts, some of which arise from the secondment of permanent members of staff from the Department of Student Administration to work full-time on the introduction of the new Student Record System for the University of East London.

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Temporary appointments until 28 April 2000. Each of these posts will be directly responsible to the Acting Head of Student Administration and the successful applicants will manage a range of key University activities which require frequent contact with students and staff at all levels, and with a range of external organisations. Applicants will be expected to have a degree level education and to be able to offer significant relevant experience combined with excellent interpersonal skills.

ACTING HEAD OF ASSESSMENT UNIT
(REF: 65598)
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(REF: 69598)
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The new chairman of the Bar Council is a tough-talking humanist with traditional legal values. By John-Paul Flintoff

One man who is propping up the Bar

Dan Brennan QC marches briskly to the bar of a hotel in St James's Park, and demands a pint. He has spent the afternoon at meetings in Parliament, where he is due back later. He has broken off, briefly, only to discuss his plans for next year and to reveal – between sips of beer – how he intends to lead barristers through a period of momentous change.

Unlike some previous Bar chairmen, Brennan, 56, will not waste months thinking about what he is going to do. He already has a timetable, starting early next year with the committee stage of the Access to Justice Bill. "I have really prepared myself," he explains, "because this Government is intent on the most radical change in the legal system for 50 years."

When Brennan was elected as vice-chairman, after just two years on the Bar Council, this was interpreted as a snub to his opponent, Jonathan Hirst QC, who had served for 10 years. But what the Bar needs now, it was decreed, is a leader far removed from the stereotype of the out-of-touch, upper-class silk. Hirst – as an Old Etonian, and son of a previous Bar Council chairman, did not fit the bill.

Thus, Heather Hallett QC, the first woman to chair the Bar Council, is succeeded next month by Brennan, who, like Hallett, went to grammar school, and grew up in Bradford (where his father ran a pub). His career at the Bar, representing victims of personal injury and medical negligence, has earned him a reputation that is practically unsurpassed. Brennan's main cases include acting for the pianist in a Hong Kong orchestra last year, in a claim relating to organo-phosphates, and he also helped to secure damages of £3.9m last month for a 17-year-old girl who requires 24-hour care since being deprived of oxygen at birth.

He has also been instructed to act in cases relating to disasters, such as the *Herald of Free Enterprise*, the *Marchioness*, and the Manchester air crash. The most challenging, he says, was "the one in which patients with haemophilia were given the HIV virus in plasma. Young people died through no fault of their own".

But, he says, this is not a depressing area of law in which to practise. "I am not a social worker, I'm

a barrister. I must be objective. I try to reassure people that they are not to be anxious. I am there to do a professional job."

Until the Bar Council began to claim too much of his time, Brennan was closely involved with the tobacco litigation currently going through the courts – which is the first multi-party action undertaken on the basis of no win, no fee. This showed genuine commitment, since the solicitors and barristers involved in the case could face losses of £3m between them if the action fails.

The solicitor leading the case, Martyn Day, knows Brennan well: "You just have to see him with a client. With some silks, the last time they were human was when they were kids. But he is really human, and when he presents a case, you're thinking to yourself: 'Sock it to the bastards!'" Vigorous in court,

'Some silks, the last time they were human was when they were kids – but he's really human, and when he's on a case you think: Sock it to the bastards!'

especially in cross-examination, Brennan says he wanted to be an advocate since he was "a young lad". And he is eager to ensure that people from similar backgrounds can continue to become barristers.

"It would be a tragedy if we went back to the middle-class Bar of the past, but the cost of qualifying puts unreasonable pressure on people from average backgrounds. That isn't right."

He joined the Bar Council when the Major government started raising the issue of conditional fee arrangements (whereby lawyers get paid only if they win). "That affected personal injury work, and I became a spokesman on the subject."

Even with a new government in power, there are few areas where Brennan agrees with the Lord Chancellor beyond a shared dislike of wigs. He considers Lord Irvine's suggestion that barristers are fat

cats as "totally unjustified", and if you ask him whether this barrister-crammed Government is relatively friendly to the Bar, he splutters into his beer and asks: "Who have you been drinking with, my boy?"

But Geoff Hoon MP, the minister of state at the Lord Chancellor's department, who is also a barrister, has insisted that the Government's approach is not to ask, "will this harm the Bar?", so much as, "will this help more people?"

Brennan says he welcomes the extension of advocacy rights to solicitors, which is proposed under the forthcoming Access to Justice Bill, but only if they are competent. "Otherwise, the public will get poor representation, and the courts will be log-jammed because of the incompetence, and the legal system will fall into disrepute."

To stem the loss of work to solicitor advocates, Brennan wants chambers to introduce "kite-marks" guaranteeing efficiency and good service. This would enable them to contract directly for cases with the body which will replace the Legal Aid Board, rather than rely on solicitors to farm out the work. He is also likely to reconsider the issue of direct access to the Bar, cutting out the solicitor's traditional role of intermediary, in cases involving companies and other professions.

Earlier this year, Brennan led the Bar Council's opposition to Lord Irvine's suggestion that legal aid should be granted only in cases assessed as having a 75 per cent chance of success. In making his case, Brennan introduced one of his own clients, Sally Murphy, who was awarded more than £2m because her daughter, deprived of oxygen at birth, suffers from cerebral palsy. Her legally aided case, explained Brennan, would never have passed the 75 per cent threshold, and with both Murphy and her partner unemployed, the case could not otherwise have come to court.

Earlier this year he also demonstrated an internationalist outlook – his wife is Spanish – by urging lawyers across Europe to lobby for damages to be harmonised across the European Union. At present, losing an eye is worth about £5,000 in Portugal, but £20,000 in Britain.

To make the Bar more relevant to the community, he hopes to expand *pro bono* work, and develop the civic education programmes with schools to deal with human rights.



Dan Brennan QC has earned his reputation as a formidable and committed advocate

Nicola Kurtz

A book on this subject, which was put together by the English Bar, was launched in several languages by the United Nations last week.

He is conscious that the Bar should not merely oppose change. On the question of legal aid, the Bar put forward its own proposals, such as taking action against lawyers who persistently offer over-optimistic advice, and continuous assessment

for legally aided cases. To support their case, Brennan brought in specialists to evaluate the potential impact of conditional fee arrangements on the Bar, some fear that the best barristers, finding themselves in great demand, will take on only the cases they know that they can win. And he also invited actuaries to examine the ultimate cost to consumers. Legal fees, they reported,

could amount to more than a quarter of a client's damages award in these cases.

Overall, he says, putting his beer to one side, the Bar's response to change has to be seen to be reasoned, well organised, and in the public interest. If the Bar has to change its professional structure, it will – but not at the cost of its independence and integrity. "This

country has traditionally relied on a strong, independent Bar. You can have an advocate for the most horrible crime, and for unpopular causes. The Bar has given representation fearlessly, regardless of the origins of the client, the power of the court, or the influence of outsiders, such as the government. That should not be lost amid changes that are economically driven."

Mixed year begins and ends wrapped up in Straw

It's been a busy year, with scandals, resignations, extradition, and the biggest shake-up for 50 years. By Linda Tsang

THE YEAR is closing in a strikingly similar way to how it began, with Home Secretary Jack Straw hogging the headlines. At the beginning of 1998, the press were running his picture on any pretext because a juvenile had been accused of a crime – in this case, drug-related – but the Attorney General had obtained an injunction against naming the cabinet minister's son who was involved. In the end, the juvenile in question, William Straw, was named in the *Scottish Daily*

Mail and *The Scotsman* (highlighting the differences in the Scottish legal system), and the injunction had to be lifted.

The year end has, of course, seen Jack Straw involved in what has been cited as one of the most important decisions in international law, with the proceedings in the extradition of General Pinochet to Spain. The decision has had international lawyers and jurists predicting that no leader who has grossly violated human rights will be above the law.

In between, there has been an almost unprecedented year of change for the legal system, affecting judges, lawyers and consumers. Despite the press coverage on how he was refurbishing his apartments at Westminster, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, made clear at the outset his aims to modernise justice – as well as modernising his mode of dress.

The Government had already trailed most of its proposals during the year, and these were included in last

month's Queen's Speech. They range from a radical overhaul of the 50-year old legal aid system, including a community legal service, to more family-friendly employment laws. There has also been consultation on reform of divorce law, including whether prenuptial agreements should be recognised, and the Government has also recently issued its consultation paper on how to deal with delays in house sales.

The Government's proposals may signal good and bad news

for the consumer, but for those at the top end of the legal profession, 1998 has not been the best of years.

Judges, in particular, have had mixed fortunes. In an unprecedented move, one High Court judge resigned in February, after three Court of Appeal judges attacked his "intolerable delay" in deciding a case – it took 20 months for Mr Justice Harman to deliver his judgment.

Things went well for the judiciary until Richard Gee, a High

Court judge, was prosecuted for alleged mortgage fraud of £1m. The trial ended with a hung jury, and the Attorney General intervened to decide that there should not be a retrial. And the recent House of Lords decision on Pinochet has had Lord Hoffman's connections with Amnesty International put under the spotlight by five other Law Lords.

On the positive side, the Pinochet case has highlighted awareness of human rights, and coincides with the passing

of the Human Rights Act, which will come into effect in 2000. And judges have also been involved in heading inquiries that are likely to have a profound effect on the legal system, such as the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, the BSE inquiry and the Bloody Sunday inquiry.

Lower down the legal echelons, the Bar came under attack with the Government's proposals to end its near monopoly on appearing in the higher courts, and the unprecedented House of Lords' inquiry into the

fees claimed from the legal aid fund in June by four QCs.

Even solicitors have had mixed fortunes. Many of the City firms have recorded record profits, and a number have also expanded globally. Linklaters & Alliance will merge with four European firms to become one of the largest legal firms in the world, and Freshfields has expanded, both in Europe and in the US, as has Allen & Overy.

The success of many law firms has been confirmed by the figures released by the Office for National Statistics – overseas earnings for law firms jumped 20 per cent, to £544m. But success has its price – recent reports from the National Crime Intelligence Service show a number of high street law firms and City law firms currently under investigation for money-laundering.

At the other end of the legal system, for the consumers of legal services this year saw the highest number of complaints against both barristers and solicitors, which has fuelled calls for the profession to disengage with self-regulation. The Office for the Supervision of Solicitors, the Legal Services' Ombudsman and the lay commissioner for complaints against barristers have all signalled to lawyers that legal services have to be improved. The main weapon in their armoury is that the Government – in the shape of the Lord Chancellor, who is looking for value for money in his reforms – is right behind them.

QUOTES OF THE YEAR

"Someone once said you have to suffer for your art. And this isn't even my art." *The Lord Chancellor on his official home restoration*

"There is no doubt that the public perception is that judges are (too soft, and out of touch). They think we start work at 11, finish at three, spend two hours in a West End club sipping sherry... and that we are totally removed from anything to do with real life. It is certainly not true." *Lord Saville of Newdigate when the Home Office was reported as considering suggesting story lines for soap operas as part of a PR offensive to increase public confidence in judges and magistrates*

"It stems from the days when women were thought to have nothing better to do than flounce around the house with a duster. So they were admitted in the daytime, but after certain hours and at weekends they got only restricted access... The view was, you can't have all those skirts clogging up the greens." *Georgina James, deputy chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, on its plans to extend sex discrimination laws to private sports clubs*

"Lawyers are eunuchs. We know how to do it, we see it done every day, yet we don't do it ourselves." *Solicitor John Verrill, vice-president of the Insolvency*


Lawyers Association, on how lawyers are sent to the back room when they are instructed in liquidations

"The use of the word 'nigger' by you indicates a real hatred of a black person, doesn't it?" "I wouldn't say so. It's just a word that comes out sometimes." *Michael Mansfield QC questioning Gary Dobson at the Stephen Lawrence inquiry*

"I have never seen myself as a 'radical lawyer'. I think the term is an oxymoron. It is the barrister's duty to be independent and I remain so." *Geoffrey Robertson QC on being a radical lawyer*

"No, this is not sour grapes. What democracy demands is that the people best suited to the jobs are appointed to them, not people who happen to know those in power. And that is also what the law requires." *Solicitor Jane Coker, who brought an industrial tribunal action against the Lord Chancellor on his appointment of special adviser Garry Hart*

"There is an element of truth in the public's view that the granting of silk constitutes a licence to print money. It is undoubtedly the occasion and pretext for a mark-up on fees." *Mr Justice Lightman, as part of his speech to the Chancery Bar Association*



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NEW FILMS

THE BOYS (18)
Director: Rowan Woods
Starring: David Wenham, Toni Collette, Lynette Curran
Out of jail after serving a sentence for GBH, oldest "boy" Brett Sprague (David Wenham) moves back into his mum's drab suburban home, terrorises his girlfriend (Toni Collette), and turns his younger brothers into petty henchmen.
Adapted from Gordon Graham's acclaimed stage-play, *The Boys* spotlights the flipside of life Down Under, with a stark social-realist drama circling gracefully around a horrific crime which is hinted at but never actually shown.
Occasionally the film's theatrical origins are too readily apparent, but Rowan Woods' stealthy handling and Wenham's menacing lead ensure that the interest seldom dwindles. Potent, predatory stuff.
West End: Metro, Ritzy Cinema

THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)
Director: Martin Campbell
Starring: Antonio Banderas, Anthony Hopkins, Catherine Zeta-Jones
The Zorro yarn resurrected. Martin "GoldenEye" Campbell's gaudy swashbuckler gallops full-speed through 19th-century California in the company of Antonio Banderas's authentically Hispanic do-gooder. A bite-sized history lesson on West Coast politics jostles for purchase amid a riot of colourful duels and clattering action setpieces. It's old-fashioned and reliably entertaining. Anthony Hopkins and Catherine Zeta-Jones bring a whiff of the valleys to their father-and-daughter co-star slots.
West End: Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road

THE PARENT TRAP (PG)
Director: Nancy Meckler
Starring: Lindsay Lohan, Natasha Richardson
The Parent Trap catches Disney cannibalising its own back catalogue, re-heating its 1961 Hayley Mills heartwarmer into a spy, cross-cultural caper starring Lindsay Lohan as the separated-at-birth twin sisters (one British, one American) determined to get their parents (Natasha Richardson and Dennis Quaid) back together. It's a film of sleek, clean surfaces, bright colours and neat knockabout comedy. But a thick layer of syrup covers every inch.
West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea

PLAYING GOD (18)
Director: Andy Wilson
Starring: David Duchovny, Timothy Hutton
Cracker director Wilson suffers a rude lesson in Hollywood politics with this glossy but garbled thriller about a junkie doctor (David Duchovny) embroiled with a gang of counterfeiters headed by a hammy Tim Hutton.
Essentially a star vehicle for Duchovny, *Playing God* nonetheless conspires to steer a most ill-disciplined course, swerving from grisly violence (cue jets of arterial blood) to a po-faced character study (Duchovny wants his licence back to do his saintly hiker). Hutton and his cronies indulge in all manner of insipid gangster chat, but they look like a limp and spindly bunch who would be hard pushed fighting their way out of a paper bag. Duchovny and luminous co-star Angelina Jolie look on stupefied.
West End: Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End

Nathanail Huttley

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

Out of Sight (15)
This tale of love on opposite sides of the law from director Steven Soderbergh manages to knock spots off every previous Elmore Leonard adaptation, and boasts in George Clooney and Jennifer Lopez the most romantic pairing of the cinematic year.

Antz (PG)
Computer-animated comedy voiced by a stellar cast stars Woody Allen (*below*) as a worker ant who becomes an unlikely opponent of the colony's totalitarian regime. Allen's best work in a while.

Ronin (15)
John Frankenheimer's action thriller is buttressed by a fine international cast (Robert De Niro, Jean Reno, Stellan Skarsgard), moody French locations and a clutch of super-charged car chases.

My Name is Joe (15)
All that one would expect from a film by Ken Loach - emotional sympathy, indignation and humour - all driven by Peter Mullan's scry, intense performance as a recovering alcoholic in a bleak vision of Glasgow.

The Fountainhead (PG: Curzon Soho)
Gary Cooper plays a visionary architect who refuses to buckle under mob pressure in King Vidor's astonishing adaptation of the Ayn Rand novel. Patricia Neal smoulders opposite him.

ANTHONY QUINN

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford
Anthony Ward's splendid sets and Aslan are the stars of the Royal Shakespeare Company's Christmas spectacular. To 27 Feb

Martin Guerre
West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds
The gifted young Irish director Conall Morrison stages a second reworking of the troubled Boubil/Schoenberg musical. Will it be third time lucky? To 13 Feb

Love Upon the Throne
Comedy Theatre
The Charles and Diana story (well, up to the divorce) presented by the National Theatre of Brent (*above*). Hilarious and oddly touching. To 31 Jan

Angela Carter Cinderella
Lyric, Hammersmith
This feast of inspired silliness and visual magic by Angela Carter has lashings of drag and double entendres, plus the best mice on a West End stage. To 9 Jan

The Boy Who Fell Into a Book
Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough
Typically witty and ingenious concept from Alan Ayckbourn - here wearing his children's dramatist hat. To 9 Jan

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Aubrey Beardsley
Victoria & Albert Museum
Displaying the short, glittering life of the aesthete and illustrator, with his sinuous and florid line. Drawings, prints and posters. To 10 Jan

Louise Bourgeois
Serpentine Gallery
Veteran French-American sculptress, still a leading light at 87, shows new installations in which a giant mother/spider presides over images of spinning and weaving, restoration and decay. To 10 Jan

Goya: The Disparates
Maidstone Museum & Art Gallery
Goya was deaf, ill and in his seventies when he produced his last series of etchings. Mysterious in intention, it is a world where life is folly, men fly off on wings into darkness. To 23 Jan

Chris Offili
Whitworth Gallery, Manchester
This 1998 Turner Prize-winner is an upheaval original. His surfaces dense and decorative, with swirls of dots, eyes, Afros and black icons, as well as incorporating mutant balls of elephant dung. To 24 Jan

Edward Burne-Jones
Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
Centenary exhibition gathers together many favourites illustrating the romantic and medievalist nether world of Burne-Jones (*above*). To 17 Jan



TOM LUBBOCK

GENERAL RELEASE

ANTZ (PG)
See *The Independent Recommends, above*.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)
The follow-up to *Babe* tosses the hapless "sheep-pig" into the midst of the city where he becomes the unlikely saviour of a bunch of assorted wails. Knockabout comedy is kept to a minimum in favour of a bleak, animatronic fairytale.
West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

BLADE (18)
A techno soundtrack bumps and grinds behind this monotonous thriller about a New York vampire killer tackling a power-crazed new bloodsucker. Noise and martial-arts action mask its tatty pedigree.
West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Warner Village West End

DANCING AT LUGHNASSA (PG)
Less a dance, more of a trudge, O'Connor's Ireland-set saga pinpoints the ebb and flow of a secentric Catholic family in deepest Donegal. What gives it backbone is Meryl Streep's regal performance as the brood's eldest sister, plus the ever-watchable Michael Gambon as the homecoming brother. Kathy Burke, Catherine McCormack and Brid Brennan also feature.
West End: Curzon Mayfair, Notting Hill Coronet, Screen on the Hill

DEAD MAN'S CURVE (15)
All the students at writer-director Dan Rosen's nameless American college are trying to butcher each other, led into temptation by an obscure regulation that awards straight-A grades to the room-mates of suicides. *Dead Man's Curve* delivers a respectable quota of drive-in shocks.
West End: ABC Piccadilly, Virgin Trocadero

ELIZABETH (15)
Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to *Bandit Queen* is the story of a woman struggling to gain purchase in a male world. But Kapur largely neglects the opportunities for fun in a film which ultimately tells a tale of independence triumphing over cruelty.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Screen on the Green, Virgin Fulham Road

THE END OF VIOLENCE (15)
Win Wenders is back on form with this stylish and intelligent techno-noir about a Nasa plot to "end violence as we know it" through mass surveillance.
West End: Ritzy Cinema

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (18)
Terry Gilliam's adaptation tilts at Ralph Steadman cartoonery for its tale of a drug-fuelled journalistic assignment. The film soon descends into a carnival of narcotic lunacy, and the one stand-out is Johnny Depp, who brings Hunter S Thompson into bald-headed, pigeon-toed life.
West End: ABC Baker Street, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Green, Virgin Haymarket

THE FOUNTAINHEAD (PG)
See *The Independent Recommends, above*.
West End: Curzon Soho

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (U)
Capra's festive bauble is a lot darker and more complex than it is generally given credit for being, with James Stewart's labouring everyman shown how dreary his hometown would have been had he never been born. Its syrupy sentimentality contains a thick vein of bile, and at the day's end, this is the making of the film; turning it into a bittersweet salute to the little man who makes a big difference.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Phoenix Cinema, Ritzy Cinema

LEFT LUGGAGE (PG)
Krabbe's first stab as a director focuses on the ebbs and flows within a Hasidic family in 1970s Holland. Fitful as drama, the film comes to life as a showcase for its high-profile performers plus rising star Laura Fraser.
West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Curzon Minima, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Phoenix Cinema, Rio Cinema, Screen on Baker Street

LOCK, STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS (18)
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels follows the lead of Quentin Tarantino, but the film's defining characteristic is its resilient morality. The picture is peopled by thugs, both amateur and professional. Young Eddy, who comes unstuck in a high-stakes card game, falls into the former category; but Hatchet Harry, to whom he owes £500,000, is a dangerous old-school pro.
West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Pantan Street, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Rio Cinema, Warner Village West End

MULAN (U)
This Disney's animated feature has it all: a pro-active heroine who doesn't want to tend to a man or pet woodland animals; a strong father/daughter relationship; honour and nobility; and, of course, cross-dressing. It's also one of the most visually innovative movies that Disney has ever made.
West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

MY NAME IS JOE (15)
See *The Independent Recommends, above*.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Hill, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket

ON CONNAT LA CHANSON (PG)
Love him or loathe him, *Last Year at Marienbad* auteur Resnais is a queer fish. Four years after the Continental breakfast he made of Alan Ayckbourn's *Smoking/No Smoking* comes this rattling merry-go-round of romantic intrigue, "inspired by the work of Dennis Potter", and featuring a lot of Potteresque lip-synching to popular French show tunes.
West End: Chelsea Cinema, Renoir

OUT OF SIGHT (15)
See *The Independent Recommends, above*.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

RONIN (15)
See *The Independent Recommends, above*.
West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road

RUSH HOUR (15)
Rush Hour marries the Hong Kong action icon Jackie Chan with an LA backdrop, a jobbing Hollywood director (*Money Talks*'s Rainer) and a wise-cracking black comic in Chris Tucker's huckstering LAPD man. Its caffeinated plotline sends Easterner and Westerner on the trail of a Chinese crime syndicate, and oscillates wildly between Tucker's verbal dexterity and Chan's adrenalinised physicality. It's a hit-and-miss affair.
West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

CINEMA
WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET
(0870 9020418) @ Baker Street
Babe: Pig in the City 12.00pm, 2.30pm, 5.10pm, 7.30pm, 9.55pm
Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas 2.25pm, 5.25pm, 8.15pm, Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 8.30pm

ABC PANTAN STREET
(0870 9020404) @ Piccadilly
Circus: The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
A Perfect Murder 2.40pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm
The Wisdom of Crocodiles 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

ABC PICCADILLY
(0171-287 4322 (from 1pm))
@ Piccadilly Circus
Dead Man's Curve 4.05pm, 8.45pm
Hamam: The Turkish Bath 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.35pm
Victory 1.10pm, 6.10pm

ABC SHAFTSBURY AVENUE
(0870 9020402) @ Leicester Square
Tottenham Court Road
Slums of Beverly Hills 1.05pm, 3.20pm, 7.05pm, 9pm
Texas Chainsaw Massacre 1.35pm, 3.55pm, 6.35pm, 8.30pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE
(0870 9020403) @ Leicester Square
Angel Sharks 1.30pm, 3.25pm, 5.20pm, 7.15pm, 9.10pm
The Governess 1.45pm, 4.05pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm
Left Luggage 1.30pm, 6.55pm
Rien Ne Va Plus 4.45pm, 9.05pm
La Vie Revele Des Angles 1.25pm, 3.45pm, 6.05pm, 8.25pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0870 9020414) @ Tottenham Court Road
Antz 1.25pm, 6.35pm
Babe: Pig in the City 1.35pm, 4pm, 6.20pm
Elizabeth 1.15pm, 3.55pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm
The Negotiator 8.50pm

BARBICAN SCREEN
(0171-638 8891) @ Barbican
Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm, 6pm, 8.15pm
The Mask of Zorro 6pm, 8.40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA
(0171-351 3742) @ Sloane Square
On Connal La Chanon 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.35pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE
(0171-498 3323) @ Clapham Common
Babe: Pig in the City 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm
It's a Wonderful Life 1.30pm, 6.30pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 4pm, 9.15pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.45pm, 3.30pm, 6.15pm, 9pm
Out of Sight 9.30pm

CURZON MAYFAIR
(0171-369 1210) @ Green Park
Dancing at Lughnassa 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

CURZON SOHO
(0171-734 2255 (12pm-6pm))
@ Leicester Square
Tottenham Court Road
The Elf 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 8.15pm
The Fountainhead 2.45pm, 9.30pm
Henry Fool 3.00pm, 9pm
It's a Wonderful Life 12.45pm, 6.30pm
The Philadelphia Story 12.30pm, 5pm, 7.15pm

ELPHANT & CASTLE CORONET
(0171-703 4988) @ Elephant & Castle
Babe: Pig in the City 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 4.30pm, 8.10pm
Rush Hour 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE
(0990-888990) @ Leicester Square
Babe: Pig in the City 1.15pm, 8.45pm
Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9pm
Out of Sight 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm

GATE NOTTING HILL
(0171-727 4043) @ Notting Hill Gate
It's a Wonderful Life 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm
Out of Sight 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.05pm

CURZON MINEMA
(0171-369 1210) @ Hyde Park Corner
La Vie Revele Des Angles 4.40pm, 8.40pm

NOTTING HILL CORONET
(0171-727 6705) @ Notting Hill Gate
Dancing at Lughnassa 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN
(08705 050007) @ Camden Town
Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm, 2.10pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.15pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm
Out of Sight 12.00pm, 3pm, 5.55pm, 8.40pm
The Parent Trap 12.15pm, 2.50pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm
Rush Hour 1.55pm, 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 9.05pm

ODEON HAYMARKET
(08705 050007) @ Piccadilly
Circus Elizabeth 2.15pm, 5pm, 7.45pm

ODEON KENSINGTON
(08705 050007) @ High Street
Kendall's Babe: Pig in the City 12.00pm, 2.25pm, 4.50pm, 7.15pm
Blade 9.35pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.25pm, 5.40pm, 8.55pm
Out of Sight 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.00pm, 3pm, 6.05pm, 9.10pm
Ronin 12.30pm, 3.25pm, 6.20pm, 9.15pm
Rush Hour 1.55pm, 4.30pm, 7.05pm, 9.40pm

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE
(08705 050007) @ Leicester Square
The Mask of Zorro 1.40pm, 2.30pm, 5.25pm, 8.20pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH
(08705 050007) @ Marble Arch
Babe: Pig in the City 11.55am, 2.10pm, 4.45pm, 6.35pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.45pm, 2.50pm, 5.55pm, 9pm
The Negotiator 8.5pm
Out of Sight 12.20pm, 3.15pm, 6.05pm, 8.55pm
The Parent Trap 12.15pm, 3.05pm, 5.55pm, 8.50pm
Rush Hour 11.50am, 2.15pm, 4.40pm, 7.05pm, 9.30pm

ODEON MEZZANINE
(08705 050007) @ Leicester Square
Elizabeth 1.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.55pm
Les Miserables 2.35pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm
Snake Eyes 2pm, 4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.35pm
There's Something About Mary 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.25pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE
(08705 050007) @ Swiss Cottage
Antz 1.50pm, 3.50pm, 6pm, 8.15pm
Babe: Pig in the City 12.10pm, 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 8.15pm
Left Luggage 1.40pm, 4.55pm, 8pm
Out of Sight 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.15pm, 3.05pm, 5.45pm, 8.25pm
Rush Hour 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm

ODEON WEST END
(08705 050007) @ Leicester Square
The Parent Trap 12.15pm, 3.05pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm
Ronin 12.35pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.25pm

PEPSI MAX CINEMA
(0171-494 4131) @ Piccadilly
Circus Everest 12.35pm, 2.40pm, 4.45pm, 7pm, 9.05pm
T-Rex: Back to The Cretaceous (3-D) 11.30am, 1.35pm, 3.40pm, 5.45pm, 8pm, 10.05pm

PHOENIX CINEMA
(0181-444 6789) @ East Finchley
It's a Wonderful Life 4pm, 6.45pm
Left Luggage 1.45pm, 6.45pm, 9pm

PLAZA
(0990-888990) @ Piccadilly
Square On Connal La Chanon 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.35pm
The Philadelphia Story 1.30pm, 6.30pm, 9pm
Saving Private Ryan 3.5pm, 7.15pm
The Truman Show 6pm, 8.30pm
Twilight 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.35pm

RENOIR
(0171-837 8402) @ Russell Square
On Connal La Chanon 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.35pm
The Philadelphia Story 1.30pm, 6.30pm, 9pm, 11.55pm
Therac 6.30pm

RIC CINEMA
(0171-254 6677) @ Dalston
Kingsland Henry Foot 8.30pm
Left Luggage 4pm, 6.15pm

RITZY CINEMA
(0171-733 2229) @ BR @ Brixton
The Boys 1.30pm, 3.25pm, 5.20pm, 7.20pm, 9.25pm
The End of Violence 2pm
It's a Wonderful Life 1pm, 6.25pm (+ Short: Whoosh!)
The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 6.15pm, 8.55pm
My Name is Joe 3.45pm, 9.10pm
+ Short: The Man Who Held His Breath
Out of Sight 1.10pm, 3.55pm, 6.35pm, 9.15pm (+ Short: Vacuum)
Rush Hour 1.45pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm

SCREEN ON BAKER STREET
(0171-935 2772) @ Baker Street
Left Luggage 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9pm
Out of Sight 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

SCREEN ON THE GREEN
(0171-226 3520) @ Highbury & Kilington
Elizabeth 1.35pm, 3.55pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 11.10pm, 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm

SCREEN ON THE HILL
(0171-435 3366) @ Belsize Park
Dancing at Lughnassa 2.45pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm
My Name is Joe 8.50pm

UCI WHITELEYS
(0990-888990) @ Queensway
Antz 1.50pm, 5.20pm, 7.20pm, 9.20pm
Babe: Pig in the City 3.50pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm
Blade 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm
The Mask of Zorro 3.05pm, 5.55pm, 8.50pm
The Negotiator 3.10pm, 6pm, 9pm
Out of Sight 3.30pm, 6.40pm, 9.15pm
The Parent Trap 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 9.40pm
Rush Hour 4.20pm, 6.50pm, 9.40pm
Snake Eyes 9.30pm

VIRGIN CHELSEA
(0870-9071010) @ Sloane Square/South Kensington
Antz 12.30pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm
My Name is Joe 9pm
Phone for details 12.20pm
Babe: Pig in the City 12.30pm, 1.15pm, 2.45pm, 3.30pm, 5pm, 6pm
Blade 2pm, 4.45pm, 7.15pm, 9.40pm
Kuch Hota Hai 2.30pm, 6pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 3.20pm, 7.15pm, 9.45pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.00pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm
Out of Sight 1pm, 4pm, 7pm, 9.40pm
The Parent Trap 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.50pm, 9.35pm
Ronin 9.40pm
Rush Hour 12.20pm, 2.35pm, 4.45pm, 7.15pm, 8pm, 9.35pm, 10pm
There's Something About Mary 9.30pm

VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD
(0870-9070711) @ South Kensington
Babe: Pig in the City 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.40pm
Elizabeth 2pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm
The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
Rush Hour 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.15pm

VIRGIN HAYMARKET
(0870-9070712) @ Piccadilly
Circus Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 6pm, 8.55pm
My Name is Joe 12.55pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm
There's Something About Mary 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm

VIRGIN TROCADERO
(0870-9070716) @ Piccadilly
Circus Antz 12.10pm, 2.20pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm
Babe: Pig in the City 1pm, 3.20pm, 5.40pm, 8.10pm
Blade 12.10pm, 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.40pm
The Negotiator 2pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm
Out of Sight 12.00pm, 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm
Rush Hour 7pm, 9.20pm
The Truman Show 1pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 9pm

WARNER VILLAGE WEST END
(0171-437 4343) @ Leicester Square
Blade 12.00pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm
Exorcist (25th Anniversary Release) 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6pm, 8.40pm
Lethal Weapon 4 12.00pm, 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm
The Negotiator 12.10pm, 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm
A Perfect Murder 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9pm
Playing God 12.10pm, 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.10pm, 9.40pm
Rush Hour 12.50pm, 1.50pm, 3.20pm, 5.50pm, 7pm, 8.20pm, 9.30pm

ACTON
PARK ROYAL WARNER VILLAGE
(0181-896 0066) @ Park Royal
Antz 12.10pm, 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm
Babe: Pig in the City 12.05pm, 1.30pm, 2.20pm, 3.50pm, 4.50pm, 7.20pm
Blade 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 7.10pm, 9.40pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 10.10pm
The Mask of Zorro 3pm, 6pm, 8.55pm

The Negotiator 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.30pm
Out of Sight 6.10pm, 9.05pm
The Parent Trap 2.50pm, 5.50pm,

MUSWELL HILL
ODEON (0870 050007) Highgate
Babe: Pig in the City 1.50pm, 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm, 10.20pm
Sight 8.35pm The Parent Trap 2.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.25pm

PECKHAM
PREMIER (0181-235 3006) 8R:
Reckless Rye Antz 12noon, 3.30pm, 5.15pm, 7.15pm, 9.15pm
The Negotiator 2.50pm, 4.50pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm
Elizabeth 7pm The Mask of Zorro 3pm, 5.30pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm
The Negotiator 8.40pm, 10.45pm
The Parent Trap 1.15pm, 4.15pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.15pm

PURLEY
ABC (0870-9020407) BR: Purley
Babe: Pig in the City 5.50pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm
The Parent Trap 5.05pm, 8.05pm, 10.05pm, 12.05pm

PURLEY
ABC (0870-9020407) BR: Purley
Babe: Pig in the City 5.50pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm
The Parent Trap 5.05pm, 8.05pm, 10.05pm, 12.05pm

RICHMOND
ODEON (0870 050007) BR/8R:
Richmond The Mask of Zorro 2.10pm, 5.40pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm
The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm, 11.40pm, 1.40pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm

ODEON STUDIO (0870 050007) BR/8R:
Richmond Antz 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm, 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm
The Negotiator 8.40pm, 10.40pm
The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm, 11.10pm, 1.10pm, 4.10pm, 6.10pm, 8.10pm, 10.10pm, 12.10pm

ROMFORD
ABC (0870-9020419) BR: Romford
Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm
The Parent Trap 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.05pm, 10.05pm, 12.05pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (0870 050007) BR: Romford Antz
12.30pm, 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm, 12.45pm
Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm
The Negotiator 8.40pm, 10.40pm
The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm, 11.10pm, 1.10pm, 4.10pm, 6.10pm, 8.10pm, 10.10pm, 12.10pm

SIDCUP
ABC (0541-555131) BR: Sidcup
Babe: Pig in the City 5.45pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm
The Parent Trap 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.05pm, 10.05pm, 12.05pm

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (0870-907017) BR: Cricke-
lewood Antz 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm
Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm
The Mask of Zorro 3pm, 5.30pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm
The Negotiator 8.40pm, 10.40pm
The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm, 11.10pm, 1.10pm, 4.10pm, 6.10pm, 8.10pm, 10.10pm, 12.10pm

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-9020415) BR: Streatham
Hill Antz 2.15pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm
Babe: Pig in the City 1.45pm, 4.05pm, 6.25pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm
The Parent Trap 2.25pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

STRAITFORD
NEW STRATFORD PICTURE
HOUSE (0553-3366) BR/8R: Stratford
East Babe: Pig in the City 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.10pm, 3pm, 5.30pm, 8.35pm, 10.45pm
The Parent Trap 12.25pm, 3.10pm, 5.55pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm, 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.45pm, 9.10pm

SURREY QUAYS
UCI (0950-888990) BR: Surrey
Quays Antz 2.45pm, 5.10pm, 7.45pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm, 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 9.30pm, 12.30pm
The Negotiator 8.30pm, 10.30pm
The Parent Trap 12.30pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm, 1.30pm, 4.30pm, 7.30pm, 10.30pm, 12.30pm

SUTTON
UCI (0950-888990) BR: Sutton
Antz 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm, 12.45pm
Babe: Pig in the City 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm, 12.45pm
The Mask of Zorro 3.15pm, 6.15pm, 9.15pm, 11.15pm
The Negotiator 8.15pm, 10.15pm
The Parent Trap 12.15pm, 3.15pm, 6.15pm, 9.15pm, 11.15pm, 1.15pm, 4.15pm, 7.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm

TURNPIKE LANE
CORNET (0181-888 2519) BR: Turnpike
Lane Babe: Pig in the City 4.25pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Mask of Zorro 4.25pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 4.25pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

UKIDEON (08705 050007) BR: UKideon
Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm, 12pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.30pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm, 12pm
The Parent Trap 1.30pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm, 12pm

WALTHAMSTOW
ABC (0870-9020424) BR: Walthamstow
Central Babe: Pig in the City 2.20pm, 5pm, 7.15pm, 9.15pm, 11.15pm
The Negotiator 8pm, 10.15pm
The Parent Trap 2pm, 5pm, 7.15pm, 9.15pm, 11.15pm, 1.15pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm

WALTON ON THAMES
THE SCREEN AT WALTON (01932-252825) BR: Walton on Thames
Babe: Pig in the City 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm
The Mask of Zorro 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm
The Parent Trap 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

WELL HALL
CORNET (0181-850 3551) BR: Well Hall
Babe: Pig in the City 4.25pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm
The Mask of Zorro 4.25pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm
The Parent Trap 4.25pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

WIMBLEDON
ODEON (08705 050007) BR/8R:
Wimbledon Antz 12.25pm, 2.15pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm, 10.45pm, 12.45pm
Babe: Pig in the City 12.15pm, 2.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm, 10.30pm, 12.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm
The Negotiator 8.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm
The Parent Trap 1.45pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm

WOOD GREEN
NEW CURZON (0181-347 6664) BR: Wood Green
Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm
The Parent Trap 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

WOODFORD
ABC (0181-989 3463) BR: Woodford
Babe: Pig in the City 1.25pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Mask of Zorro 1.25pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 1.25pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm

WOOLWICH
CORNET (0181-854 5043) BR: Woolwich
Arsenal Babe: Pig in the City 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Mask of Zorro 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm

CINEMA
REPERTORY

LONDON
CINE LUMIERE Queensberry Place
SW7 (0171-838 2144/2146) L'Ado-
lescente (15) 8pm

**THE LUX Hoxton Square N1 (0171-684 0201) Phatic Pleasures: Cine-
ma Showcase Shorts (NC) 7pm
Peeping Tom (18) 8pm**

THE OLD TRUMAN BREWERY
Brick Lane E1 (0171-247 8881) Film
Master Class 2: With Sally Hibbin
and Ken Loach (NC) 6.30pm

PRINCE CHARLES Leicester Place
WC2 (0171-437 8181) Fire (15)
3.30pm Sliding Doors (15) 6.10pm
Amageddon (12) 8.45pm

RIVERSIDE STUDIOS Crip Road W6
(0171-420 0100) Time of the
Apocalypse (16) 6.30pm + Gadio Di-
lo (15) 9.10pm

WATERSMANS CENTRE High Street
(0181-568 178) Hamam:
The Turkish Bath (R) Bagno Turco
Hamam (NC) 1.30pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm
The Disappearance of Flibar (15)
4.45pm Les Misérables (12)
6.45pm

BRIGHTON
DUKE OF YORKS (01273-602503) Dances at Lughnasa
(PG) 4.15pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm
The Last Days of Pompeii (12) 6.30pm

BRISTOL
CUBE (0114-907 4191) My Name
Is Joe (15) 7pm, 9pm, 11pm
Fear and Loathing in
Las Vegas (18) 8pm

WATERSHED (0117-925 3845)
Henry Ford (18) 5.30pm, 8.15pm
La Vie Revee Des Anges (18) 6pm
Dancing At Lughnasa (PG) 8.25pm

CAMBRIDGE
ARTS CINEMA (01223-504444)
Dancing At Lughnasa (PG) 1pm, 7.15pm
Left Luggage (PG) 3pm, 9.15pm
The Land Girls (12) 5pm

CARDIFF
CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE (01222-395666) The Adventures of Robin
Hood (U) 6.15pm, 8.15pm, 10.15pm

IPSWICH
FILM THEATRE 01473-215544 I
Want You (18) 2.30pm, 6.15pm
Fanny Games (18) 6pm
Character (15) 8.15pm Overlooking Jack
(15) 8.30pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

ODEON (0870 050007) 8R:
Streatham Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm, 10.40pm, 12.40pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Negotiator 8.20pm, 10.20pm
The Parent Trap 12.20pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.20pm, 10.20pm, 12.20pm

THEATRE

WEST END

Ticket availability details are for to-
day, times and prices for the week-
running times include intervals. ●
Seats at all prices. ● Returns only
Matinees: (1) Sun, (3) Tue, (4) Wed,
(5) Thur, (6) Fri, (7) Sat

B22 AND ABOUT THE BOY Three friends and their respective
problems are put under the micro-
scope in Ed Hime's new drama.
Preceded by a new short, Royal
Court Upstairs (at The Ambassa-
sadors) West Street, WC2 (0171-
765 5000) ● Leic Sq. Mon-Fri
1.15pm, 10p-11p, double bill
(17.15pm) 8pm, 10.15pm, 12.15pm
(on same night) £7.50-£15.

ALANES AND EXCURSIONS Michael Fray's new comedy about a
dinner party which is interrupted
by mysterious messages stars
Felicity Kendal and John Lawrence,
Georgie Shabrova, Avenue, WI
(0171-494 5065) ● Pic Cir. Mon-
Sat 7.30pm, [5/7] 3pm, £19.50-
£27.50, 130 mins.

AMADEUS David Suchet stars
as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's ac-
claimed drama. Old Vic The Cut, SE1
(0171-928 7616/cc 420 0000)
BR/8R Waterloo. Mon-Sat 7.30pm,
[1] 2.30pm, [7] 3pm, £7.50-£30,
180 mins.

ANNE Rags to riches story of the
opinionistic Anne, Victoria Palace
Theatre, SW1 (0171-834 1317)
BR/8R Victoria. Tue-Sat
7.30pm, [4/7] 2.30pm, [1] 4pm,
£7.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

ART Larry Lamb, Jack Dee, Tim
Healy in Yasmina Reza's comedy
about art and friendship. Wynd-
ham's Charing Cross Road, WC2
(0171-365 1736/cc 0171-857
1111) ● Leic Sq. Tue-Sat 8pm,
[3] 3pm, [7/11] 5pm, £9.50-£27.50,
90 mins.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Lash-
ley family musical based on Disney's
cartoon version of the favourite fairy
tale. Dominion Tottenham Court
Road, WI (0171-455 1888)
● Ct. Rd. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [5/7]
2.30pm, booking to June 26,
£18.50-£35, 150 mins.

THE BEST OF TIMES Revue-
style show featuring the songs of Jerry
Bernstein. Wavendish Theatre, WC2
(0171-836 9987) BR/8R Charing X,
Mon-Fri 8pm, Sat 8.30pm, [4/7]
3.30pm, £9.50-£27.50.

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Rus-
sell's long-running Liverpool mus-
ical. The Adelphi, Adelphi Road, WC2
(0171-465 1733) ● Leic Sq/Fort Ct. Rd. Mon-Sat
7.45pm, [5/7] 3pm, [7] 4pm, £11.50-
£32.50, 165 mins.

BOOGIE NIGHTS Shane Richie
stars in a brand new 1970s musical.
Savoy Strand, WC2 (0171-836
8888/cc 0171-836 0479) ● Charing
X/Charing X, Mon-Thur 8pm,
Fri-Sat 8.30pm, [6] 3pm, 5pm,
ends 9 Jan, £11-£28.50,
150 mins.

BUDDY Musical biopic show-
tracing the brief life of Buddy Holly.
Strand Aldwych, WC2 (0171-930
8800) ● Covent Garden/Charing X,
Tue-Thu 8pm, Fri 5.30pm & 8.30pm,
Sat 5pm & 8.30pm, mats [1] 4pm,
£10-£27, half price Friday matinee,
160 mins.

CATS Lloyd Webber's musical ver-
sion of T.S. Eliot's poems. New Lon-
don Palladium, King Street, WC2
(0171-462 2222) ● Ct. Rd. Mon-Sat
7.45pm, [5/7] 3pm, £12.50-£35,
165 mins.

CHICAGO Maria Friedman and
Peter Davison star in this hit Broadway
musical. Adelphi, Adelphi Road, WC2
(0171-344 0055) ● Charing X,
Mon-Sat 8pm, [4/7] 3pm, £16-
£36 (inc booking fee), 130 mins.

CINDERELLA Angela Carter's ver-
sion of this fairytale is staged by the
reclaimed Independent Theatre. Lyric
Hammersmith, King Street, W6
(0181-741 2311) ● Hammersmith,
today 1.30pm, ends 9 Jan, £9-£18,
canc 6.50.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(ABRIDGED) Reduced Shakespeare
Company fast-forward through 37
plays. Criterion Piccadilly Circus, WI
(0171-369 1747) ● Pic Cir. Wed-
Sat 5pm, [5/7] 3pm, [7] 5pm, [11] 4pm,
£6-£25, Thu mats - all seats £10,
120 mins.

DR DOLITTLE Phillip Schofield
talks to the animals in this new
stage adaptation featuring Jim Hen-
son Puppets. London Apollo Ham-
mersmith Queen Caroline Street, W6
(0171-416 6022) ● Hammersmith,
Tue-Sat 7.30pm, [4/7] 2.30pm,
£10-£32.50, 150 mins.

FRANK THE MUSICAL High-octane
stage version of the TV series
charting the highs and lows of a class
of young showbiz hopefuls. Prince of
Wales Coventry Street, WI (0171-
599 5972) ● Leic Sq/Pic Cir. Mon-
Thu 8pm, Fri 5.30pm & 8.30pm, Sat
4pm & 8pm, ends 16 Jan, £15-£30,
120 mins.

FLUMENIA Judi Dench and
Michael Pennington star in this new
translation of Eduardo de Filippo's play.
Piccadilly Denman Street, WI (0171-
369 1734) ● Pic Cir. Today 3pm,
ends 7 Jan, £12-£18, 145 mins.

FOUR AND DAUGHTERS Richard Wilson directs Christopher
Shinn's debut work. Preceded by a
short, Royal Court Upstairs (at The
Ambassadors) West Street, WC2
(0171-565 5000) ● Leic Sq, Tue-
Fri, 9pm, 10p-11p, double bill
(7.15pm & 9pm performances on
same night) £7.50-£15.

GREASE Energetic stage version
of the hit film about life in an Ameri-
can high school. Cambridge Earham
Street, WC2 (0171-494 5080)
● Covent Garden, Mon-Sat 7.30pm,
[4/7] 3pm, £10-£30, 150 mins.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Christo-
pher Cummins and Susannah York
star in Peter Hall's acclaimed produc-
tion of Wilde's comedy. Lyric Shaftesbury
Avenue, WI (0171-494 5045) ●
Pic Cir. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5/7]
3pm, [7] 5pm, £10-£25, 165 mins.

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Stephen
Daldry's widely-acclaimed produc-
tion of J.B. Priestley's thriller. Garrick
Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-494
5080) ● Leic Sq, Mon-Fri 7.45pm,
Sat 8.15pm, [4] 2.30pm, [7] 5pm,
£10.50-£25, 110 mins.

INTO THE WOODS Sundheim
and Lapine's acclaimed musical
about the sinister side of fairy tales
fairytale. Donmar Warehouse
Earham Street, WC2 (0171-369
1732) ● Covent Garden, Mon-Sat
7.30pm, [4/7] 2.30pm, booking to
13 Feb, £15-£27.50.

THE INVENTION OF LOVE Tom
Stoppard's play about the life of po-
et A.E. Housman, author of *The
Shropshire Lad*. Theatre Royal,
Haymarket, SW1 (0171-
930 8800) ● Pic Cir. Tue-Sat
7.30pm, [4/7] 2.30pm, £10-
£32.50.

JESUS, MY BOY Tom Conti stars
in John Dowie's alternative Chris-
mas show. Apollo Shaftesbury Ave-
nue, WI (0171-494 5070) ● Pic Cir.
Tue-Fri 8pm, Sat 5pm & 8pm,
[1] 3pm, 5pm, £5.50-£15.50.

KAPKA'S DICK Eric Sykes and
Julia McKenzie star in Alan Ben-
nett's comedy about the mordant
writer P.G. Wodehouse. Denman Street, WI
(0171-369 1734) ● Pic Cir.
Tonight 8pm, ends 26 Feb, £12-£30,
120 mins.

LOVE UPON THE THRONE Tantalous
look at the Charles and Di-
ana marriage. Comedy Pantheon
Street, SW1 (0171-369 1731) ●
Pic Cir/Leic Sq. Mon-Sat 8pm,
[4/7] 3pm, ends 31 Jan, £8-£25.

LES MISÉRABLES Musical
dramatisation of

THURSDAY RADIO

RADIO 1 (97.9-98.9MHz FM)
6.30 Zoe Ball. 9.00 Simon Mayo's Office Party. 12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Dave Pearce. 8.00 Steve Lamacq. 10.00 Evening Session. 10.00 Trade Up. 10.10 John Peel. 12.00 Andy Kershaw. 12.00 Emma B. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.

RADIO 2 (88-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Ken Bruce. 12.00 Jimmy Young. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 David Allen. 8.00 Paul Jones. 9.00 The Al Read Show. 9.30 Love 40 - New Ballads. 10.00 Girls and Guitars. 10.30 Richard Allison. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Mo Dutt.

RADIO 3 (90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Bach. 1.00 Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestra. 4.00 Ensemble. 4.45 Music Machine. 5.00 In Tune. 7.30 Performance on 3. Conductor Van Pascal Tonder. Michael Rudy (piano). Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No. 3. Rachmaninov: Symphony No. 2 in E minor. 9.15 Postscript. Kevin Jackson unravels the stories behind classic works of European literature. 4. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: 'The Confessions'. With memoir, confession and autobiography now one of the most popular areas of modern non-fiction writing, Kevin Jackson looks at the pioneer of self-revelation, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He examines contemporary public reaction to Rousseau's 'Confessions' and compares the themes and strategies of his groundbreaking work with modern examples of the form. See Pick of the Day. 9.40 Beethoven: Piano Sonata in G minor, Op. 49 No. 1. Stephen Kovacevich. 1.00 Music Restored. Chris de Souza introduces a second concert

PICK OF THE DAY

THANKS TO Naocy Mitford (right), middle-class parents have had to worry about their children saying "toilet" instead of "lavatory" and "pardon?" instead of "what?" According to Stafford on Humour (3.30pm R4), this nonsense was meant as a tease: despite suffering physical and emotional pain, which led to at least one suicide attempt, Mitford had an urge to

amuse, and it never occurred to her to use her own suffering as material for literature. Postscript (9.15pm R3) tonight studies Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose Confessions started the fashion for self-revelation. Kevin Jackson assesses the book's impact and wonders whether Rousseau was quite as candid as he claimed to be.

ROBERT HANKS



of Spanish music from the recent day of Radio 3 Invitation Concerts at the Royal Academy of Music in London. This time the performers are the ensemble Jodares, who are directed by Belinda Sykes in a rousing programme of music reflecting the three co-existing cultures of medieval Andalusia - Christian, Arabic and Jewish. 10.45 Night Waves. As the Royal Opera prepare for the opening of their new production of Rimsky-Korsakov's 'The Golden Cockerel', Paul Allen examines the political background to its first performance and explores different readings of Pushkin's original story. Plus a letter from Weimar as the city prepares to take up the mantle of European City of Culture in 1999 - the smallest city yet to receive the honour. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Elliott Carter. (R) 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4 (92.4-94.8MHz FM)
6.00 Today. 9.00 NEWS. In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg. 9.30 Diaries of Today. 9.45 Serial: Dear Bill. 10.00 NEWS. Women's Hour. 10.00 NEWS. Crossing Continents. 11.30 Christmas Shopping. 12.00 NEWS. You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Hidden Treasures. 2.00 NEWS. The Archers. 2.45 Afternoon Play: The Teahouse Detective.

3.00 NEWS: Call You and Yours: 0171 580 4444. 3.30 Stafford on Humour. See Pick of the Day. 4.45 With Great Pleasure. 4.00 NEWS: Law in Action. 4.30 The Material World. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 The Warriors. 7.00 NEWS: The Archers. 7.45 Front Row. Mark Lawson with the arts programme, including the pick of the year's video releases. 7.45 Under One Roof. With Jenni Murray and guests. Drama: 'Under One Roof' by Jenny Lindreth, based on the original stories by Michele Hanson. As Christmas approaches, shopping, cooking and clubbing reach frantic proportions for Gillian, her daughter Chloe and her mother Bernice. Nativity is in the air even for Molly the dog. With Janet Maw and Edna Dora. Director Marilyn Irlie. Part 4. 8.00 NEWS: Life with Josie. In July 1996, Lin Russell and her daughter Megan were murdered as they walked home from school. This moving account describes how Lin's other daughter, Josie, who was badly injured in the attack, and her father Shaun have rebuilt their lives. It includes an audio diary made by Shaun to record his feelings as Josie underwent another operation. Narrated by Stan Parr Hewman. 8.30 The Week in Westminster. Boris Johnson of the Daily Telegraph takes a look behind the scenes at Westminster.

9.00 NEWS: Ground Control. A four-part series in which Angela Lamont reports on the technology behind some of Britain's biggest civil engineering projects. 3: The Channel Tunnel Rail Link. 9.30 In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg. Melvyn Bragg and guest discuss ideas and events which have influenced our time. 10.00 The World Tonight. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Spiderweb. By Penelope Lively, read by Stephanie Cole (9/10). 11.00 The Cradleys. By Mike Haskins and Griff Rhys Jones. Comedy family the Cradleys continue their traumas in another exclusive from Copping Mount. With Simon Godley and Felicity Montagu. 11.55 MacLean: The Memoirs Years. 11.30 Now Radio. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: Aphrodite. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

RADIO 4 LW (98.1kHz)
9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament.

RADIO 5 LIVE (693, 909kHz MW)
6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell.

12.00 The Midday News.
1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 Time of My Life. Sportsmen and women relive the golden moments of their careers. Tonight, John Murray talks to David Steele, the batsman who came to England's rescue by defying the deadly pace attack of Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson during the 1975 Ashes series against Australia. Contributors include Tony Greig, Ian Chappell, Geoff Cooke and Ian Woolbridge. 8.00 Inside Edge. Rob Bonnet and the team investigate the current sporting issues. 9.00 Hoops. Weekly round-up of British basketball. 9.30 Sportshop. The sports consumer programme, including sport investigations and news of all the latest sporting gadgets. 10.00 Late Night Live. With Nick Robinson. Until 10.30 Sport. 11.00 News. 11.15 Financial World Tonight. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM (100.1-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Nick Bailey. 8.00 Henry Kelly. 12.00 Requests. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 Jamie Cullum. 6.30 Newsnight. 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. 8.00 Evening Concert. 1.00 Alan Mann. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

VRGIN RADIO (125, 187, 126.0kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Russ Williams. 1.00 Nick Abbot. 4.00 Harriet Scott. 7.30 Mark Forster. 10.00 Janey Lee Grace. 1.00 James Merritt. 4.30 - 6.30 Jeremy Clark.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO (98.1kHz LW)
1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Composer of the Month. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 Focus on Faith. 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Report. 3.45 Sports Roundup. 3.50 Assignment. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

TALK RADIO
6.00 Bill Overton and Sally Meen. 9.00 Scott Chisholm. 12.00 Lorraine Kelly. 2.00 Anna Rørdum. 4.00 Peter Deeley. 5.00 The Sports Zone. 8.00 James Whale. 1.00 - 6.00 Ian Collins.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

FOR THOSE with an Internet connection, Gary Kasparov will be online today from 1.30pm at <http://www.wireplay.co.uk/chess/> giving a simultaneous display to launch the Internet-based Play Games Now! for BT's Wireplay. Peerless in simultaneous play, Kasparov ought to clean up against the three teams of journalists, players from the Mind Games network and juniors: Thomas Rendle, Gawain Jones, Murugan Thiruchelvan and David Howell; though there is the additional factor of the mouse. At the weekend one of my Bundesliga colleagues, whose Internet Chess Club handle is "Flying-Piket", explained that he plays at the ICC (<http://www.chessclub.com>) on his laptop, which has a built-in mouse. I can hardly imagine how he can bear to do so when fine positional games are often spoiled by an horrendous finger-or-rather, rodent-slip, leading to immediate defeat and a cheery "Thx (as in 'Thanks') from his rating-mad opponents. I'm sure that Kasparov will have no problems in this department today. But his match with Vladimir Kramnik a fortnight ago was more stressful. In fact, quite rightly, they were paying on a sensory board: but another Bundesliga colleague expressed the somewhat mischievously whimsical regret that they hadn't been using mice...

Although normal chess hardly requires strength, there is the slight physical component of moving the pieces, pressing the clock and writing down the moves. Normally quite unobtrusive, these can take centre-stage at the Olympiad. Boris Gulko, an orthodox Jew, moved his own pieces on a couple of religious holidays but required a surrogate to do the work of pressing the electric clock. And under sufficient stress even the transfer of a chess piece can become problematical. I will remember an incident with Ljubomir Ljubojevic at London 1980 when, in time trouble, he picked up his queen and hurried it along the eighth rank - sadly not precisely where he intended it. After a magnificent row we agreed to a gentlemanly draw. The Romanian Florin Gheorghiu once lost on time in a woe position against Bent Larsen when he simply couldn't command his hand to play the winning move. Kasparov's opponent in today's game from a six-board clock simultaneous against the Argentine national team last year is a 2,655-rated grandmaster, but he was still slaughtered. Already worse, Spangenberg compounded matters with 15... Bb6? losing two tempi since if 16... Bxb2+ 17 Kh1 Bb7 18 g3 Bc6 19 d5 wins a piece. At the end, Black is losing a whole rook.

White: Gary Kasparov
Black: Hugo Spangenberg
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 d5	14 bxc3 Qc7
2 Nf3 Nf6	15 c4 Bb6?
3 c4 dxc4	16 c5! Be7
4 e3 e6	17 Bf4 Qd7
5 Bxc4 c5	18 Rac1 Qc6
6 0-0 a6	19 d5 exd5
7 Bb3 Nc6	20 Bxd5 Qg6
8 Nc3 Be7	21 h3 Ra7
9 Qc2 0-0	22 Qc3 Bf6
10 Rd1 exd4	23 c6 bxc6
11 Nxd4 Nxd4	24 Ba6 Bf5
12 exd4 Nd5	25 Bxf5 Qxd5
13 Qb3 Nxc3	26 g4 1-0

POKER

DAVID SPANIER

AS 1998 ends, it is clear that the gambling genie is out of the bottle and will not go back in. That is evident from the resounding victory at the ballot box by the pro-gambling forces in the recent American elections. Missouri approved boat casinos, Californians voted to expand Indian casinos, in South Carolina and Alabama voters replaced anti-lottery Republican governors with pro-lottery Democrats. At the same time, the megabucks casinos in Las Vegas suffered a setback. The Indian tribes in California won the right to run slot machines in their casinos. If they get their way, as subject to legal wrangling they probably will, it will cost Las Vegas an estimated \$400m a year in lost revenue. This, too, was a vote for more gambling. Do the political front, the gambling lobby in the US looks like coming out well on top, in the hearings now being held by the National Gambling Impact Commission. This somewhat unwieldy body was dreamed up by the opponents of gambling, led by Rev Tom Grey, who castigates it in fire and brimstone as the distraction of the devil. The pro-lobby is led by Frank Fahrenkopf, a former Republican fundraiser. To hear him tell it, gambling brings more benefits to society than motherhood and apple pie combined. As industry spokesman he has a salary of \$800,000 a year. He can produce more pro-gambling statistics, it seems, than there are stars in the heavens. Rev Grey talks a good game but in reality knows he hasn't got a prayer against the massed forces of Nevada. He is now talking of merely "reducing the spread" of commercial gambling. The most that the commission will do, observers believe, is to put forward a series of mild recommendations, which the gambling industry can easily live with. One proposal may be to provide help for gamblers who have a "problem". There are no reliable figures available for problem gambling, which is usually put at around 2-3 per cent of players. Who better to help these unfortunate people, by funding research and counselling, than the very casinos or lotteries that put temptation in their way in the first place? Especially as this would demonstrate a proper sense of civic responsibility. American casinos have no intention of suffering the fate of the tobacco industry. Now they have the popular vote as well as the big bucks to ensure that their future will be "win, win, win".

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

EVEN AFTER dozens of movies, Woody Allen is refreshingly still able to experiment as a filmmaker. Everyone Says I Love You (8pm Sky Premier) is a tribute to the great Hollywood singing extravaganzas of the 1930s. It might not be a complete success, but at least he tried something different. In a plot interweaving several different strands, he stars as a married man romancing Julia Roberts in Venice. Meanwhile, Skylar (Drew

Barrymore, right), the daughter of upper-crust Boh (Alain Alda) and Steffi (Goldie Hawn), chucks her fiancé (Edward Norton) for a dangerous ex-con (Tim Roth). Mick Jagger may not have been all that pleased about recent press coverage, but it comes with the territory when you remain as big a star as he is. Now into his fifties, the evergreen Rolling Stone is profiled in Biography (9pm History Channel).

JAMES RAMPTON



SKY PREMIER
6.00 The Perfect Mother (1996) (53949).
6.00 The Staircase (1998) (56765).
10.00 Miss Evans' Boys (1997) (56599).
12.00 The Perfect Mother (1996) (53949).
2.00 Hamlet (1996) (565639).
4.05 Miss Evans' Boys (1997) (56599).
4.30 On the Second Day of Christmas (1997) (53340).
7.30 Hollywood Buzz (5494).
8.00 Everyone Says I Love You (1996) (56727).
See Pick of the Day.
10.00 The Glimmer Man (1996) (28561).
11.35 Stealing Beauty (1996) (70369).
1.35 Hotel Svalbard (1995) (52576).
3.30 - 6.00 Roommates (1995) (56234).

SKY MOVIECLAX
6.00 Address Unknown (1996) (28185).
7.30 A Holiday for Love (1996) (6766630).
9.45 Gus (1976) (44834307).
11.00 Jaws Vengeance 800 Leagues down the Amazon (1994) (56611).
1.00 The Land Before Time (1994) (56611).
See Pick of the Day.
3.00 Address Unknown (1996) (28185).
5.00 A Holiday for Love (1996) (6766630).
6.30 E! News Week in Review (1997) (5611).
In Defense of Murder (1997) (47456).
11.00 Young Guns II (1993) (545630).
12.45 Night Eyes 4 (1995) (707760).
2.25 Banned Behind Bars (1995) (796676).
4.00 - 6.00 Five Desperate Hours (1997) (83474).

SKY CINEMA
4.00 Captain Horatio Hornblower (1991) (756529).
6.00 Blood in the Moon (1949) (567253).
8.00 Dirty Harry: Crazy Larry (1976) (2384530).
9.30 Hollywood Hell of Fame (1924494).
10.00 The Towering Inferno (1974) (47456).
12.45 The French Connection II (1975) (2703760).
2.40 A Star Is Born (1954) (564470).
5.30 Close.

SKY FOUR
6.00 Alphaville (1965) (2036494).
8.00 Backlash (1993) (564033).
9.40 Two White for Me (1969) (1109).
Barney on (1995) (565473).
12.40 Walking and Talking (1996) (565556).
2.05 Eds Next Move (1996) (565556).
3.30 Pump Up the Volume (1996) (564470).
5.30 - 6.00 Gunbuster (1994/97).

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
4.00 Rex Hunts Fishing World (1995/94).
4.30 Walker's World (1995/94).
5.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995/94).
5.30 Jurassic (1995/94).
6.00 Animal Doctor (1995/94).
6.30 Alaska's Arctic Wildlife (1995/94).
7.30 Beyond 2000 (1995/94).
8.00 Science Frontiers: The

Science of Star Trek (1995/94).
9.00 Whales and Kales: The Story (1995/94).
10.00 Intensive Care: The Problem with Men (1995/94).
11.00 Forensic Detectives (1997/22).
12.00 Empire of the East (1996/47).
1.00 Connections 2 by James Burke (1995/94).
1.30 Ancient Warriors (1997/03).
2.00 Close.

SKY ONE
7.00 The Simpsons (1992/3).
7.30 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (1994/4).
8.30 Hollywood Squares (1985/9).
9.00 Gullit! (1994/9).
10.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (1992/3).
11.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (2003/6).
12.00 Jerry Jones (1993/359).
12.55 The Special K Collection (1992/104).
1.00 Days of Our Lives (1995/97).
1.55 The Special K Collection (1992/104).
2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (1992/3).
2.55 The Special K Collection (1992/104).
3.00 Jerry Jones (1993/359).
3.55 The Special K Collection (1992/104).
4.00 Gullit! (1994/9).
5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (1996/6).
6.00 Married with Children (1992/3).
6.30 Dream Team (1992/7).
7.00 The Simpsons (1992/3).
7.30 Real TV (1995/6).
8.00 Friends (1995/6).
8.30 Friends (1995/6).
9.00 Friends (1995/6).
9.30 Friends (1995/6).
10.00 Dream Team (1992/7).
11.30 Star Trek (1974/6).
12.30 Renegade (1994/7).
1.30 - 7.00 Long Play (1994/299).

SKY SPORTS 1
7.00 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
7.45 World Wrestling Federation Shot Gun

(1997/37).
8.45 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
9.30 Racing News (1997/37).
10.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
10.30 Pool (1997/27).
10.30 Fingering (1995/4).
12.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
12.30 Ford Football Special Manchester United vs Chelsea (1998/8).
2.00 Unbelievable Sports (1994/4).
2.30 Fingering (1995/4).
4.00 Pool (1997/27).
4.30 World Wrestling Federation Superstars (1997/37).
5.00 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
5.30 Football League Review (1994/4).
7.00 What a Weekend (1998/30).
7.30 Football (1998/30).
8.00 Spanish Football (1998/30).
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10.45 Trans World Sport (1998/30).
11.45 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
12.00 Football League Review (1994/4).
12.30 What a Weekend (1998/30).
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1.30 Spanish Football (1998/30).
2.30 Spanish Football (1998/30).
3.00 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
4.30 Close.

SKY SPORTS 2
7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
7.30 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
8.45 Racing News (1997/37).
9.30 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
10.00 Pool (1997/27).
10.30 Fingering (1995/4).
12.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
12.30 Ford Football Special Manchester United vs Chelsea (1998/8).
2.00 Unbelievable Sports (1994/4).
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1.30 Spanish Football (1998/30).
2.30 Spanish Football (1998/30).
3.00 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
4.30 Close.

SKY SPORTS 3
7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
7.30 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
8.45 Racing News (1997/37).
9.30 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
10.00 Pool (1997/27).
10.30 Fingering (1995/4).
12.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (1995/4).
12.30 Ford Football Special Manchester United vs Chelsea (1998/8).
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3.00 Sky Sports Centre (1997/37).
4.30 Close.

UK GOLD
7.00 Crossroads (1995/987).
7.30 Neighbours (1995/987).
7.55 EastEnders

(1995/987).
8.30 The Bill (1995/987).
9.00 The Bill (1995/987).
9.30 Midsomer Murders (1995/987).
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